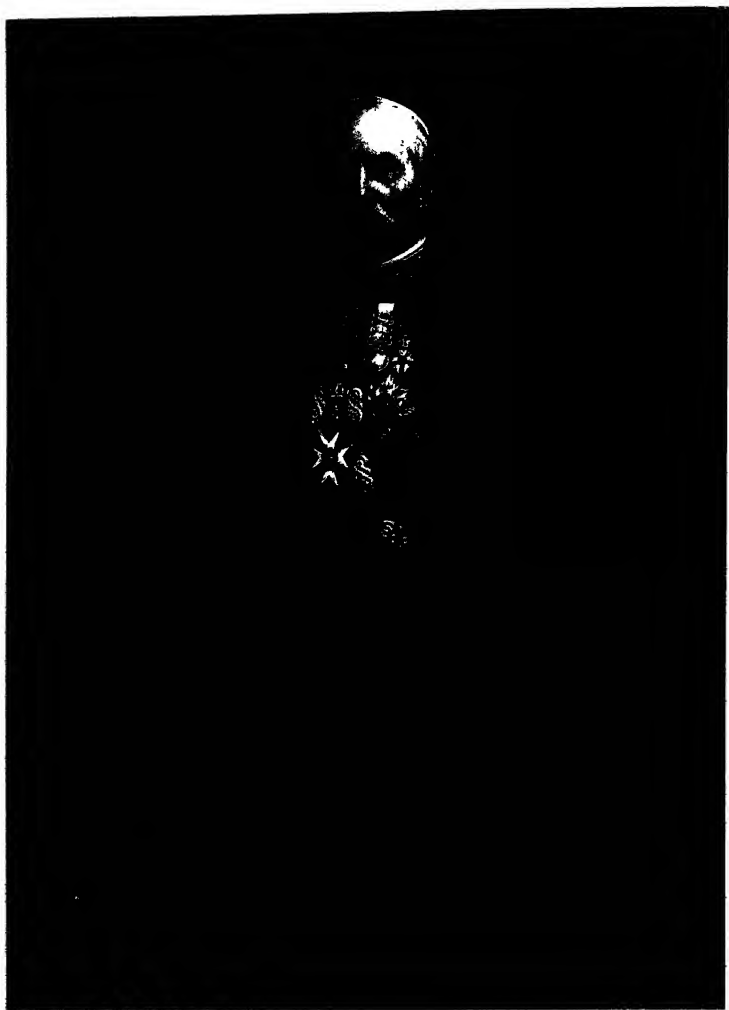


SEVENTY-ONE YEARS OF A
GUARDSMAN'S LIFE



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SEVENTY-ONE YEARS
OF A
GUARDSMAN'S LIFE

BY
GENERAL SIR GEORGE HIGGINSON
G.C.B., Etc.

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON
SMITH, ELDER & CO., 15, WATERLOO PLACE

1916

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PRINTED BY
WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED
LONDON AND BECCLES.

TO
FIELD-MARSHAL HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE
DUKE OF CONNAUGHT AND STRATHEARN,
K.G., G.C.B., &c.
OUR COLONEL
AND MY BROTHER OFFICERS PAST AND PRESENT
OF THE
FIRST OR GRENADIER REGIMENT OF FOOT GUARDS
THESE PAGES
ARE, BY PERMISSION, AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED BY
ONE WHO DURING HIS LONG SERVICE AMONG
THEM LEARNT TO SET A HIGHER
VALUE ON FRIENDSHIP
THAN ON FAME

PREFACE

DURING a winter abroad, after a period of great sorrow, I took advantage of a retentive memory, and aided by a dear and devoted daughter,* gathered together many reminiscences which, reaching back to the "forties," recall customs now obsolete, and bring to life, if but for a moment, notable persons long forgotten by society and even the historian. And further, while in search of other papers after my father's death, I found a box containing all my own letters addressed to my family during the Crimean War, extending over a period of two years and a half. As I had written by every mail the packet was large, and some years ran by before I, already a veteran, reopened the carefully preserved records of my life during that campaign. Many of the letters had been written under trying conditions, and without any attempt at revision or even regard to grammar; and, in short, they were the unstudied outpourings of thought on current events, forecasting recklessly, reflecting with too hasty judgment. Yet I did not find that either our sufferings or the dreary monotony of our daily work revealed despondency, or a desire to relinquish the task set before us.

It is my hope that, while perusing these letters,

* Maud Evelyn, wife of Roderick D., eldest son of W. D. Mackenzie of Fawley Court, Henley-on-Thames, and Farr, Inverness.

some of the younger members of the Brigade may learn to believe that, though "the race may not be to the swift nor the battle to the strong," there is a reward greater than honours or ribands can confer in the friendship and affection of comrades and the respect and goodwill of the rank and file. I am therefore venturing to trace in rapid succession the events of a very long life, chequered by no special evidence of success or failure; and I am inspired solely by the hope that the descendants of those with whom I was associated in my early life may be reminded how true and faithful was the regard our forefathers cherished for that "little company of soldiers" who, for more than two hundred and fifty years, have, as the First Regiment of Guards, served their King and country with undeviating loyalty.

To the sympathetic aid of my friend, Sir Herbert Maxwell, I am indebted for the arrangement of the selected letters and memoirs in such form for publication as his long experience as an author could so well suggest.

Want of space has necessitated the omission of many letters, besides references to friends of whom I cherish happy memories. The bugle sounds the "Halt," whether the next call should be the "Advance" must rest with you, my comrades past and present.

G. W. H.

August, 1916.

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SEVENTY-ONE YEARS OF A GUARDSMAN'S LIFE

CHAPTER I

PARENTAGE, BIRTH, AND BOYHOOD

It is not without pride that I trace our descent from the father of the Rev. Francis Higginson, sometime Rector of Claybrooke, in Leicestershire, which living he obtained in 1615. No difficulty about his conformity arose for some years ; but, as time went on, he came under the influence of the Rev. Arthur Hildersham. Following the example and precept of that inflexible zealot, he declined to subscribe, and in consequence was deprived of his living in 1627. In the following year, Higginson determined to throw in his lot with the community of Salem, Massachusetts—the colony founded in 1620 by the devoted little band that sailed in the *Mayflower*. In 1629, the Massachusetts Bay Company appointed him minister of the congregation at Salem, and from him sprang the American branch of our family, which, down to the present time, has held so high a position in the city of Boston.

It is from a brother of the Rector of Claybrooke that I am immediately descended. Two of his grandsons served in the Duke of Marlborough's wars in Germany ; one a captain in the 16th Light Dragoons was dangerously

wounded at Ramilies, the other, William, also a captain of Dragoons, from whom I claim descent, was killed at the siege of Lille. He married Miss Hunt, and had two sons, the eldest, another William, commanded a company in Sir Robert Rich's Dragoons; the second, my great-grandfather John, citizen of London, owned a large timber wharf on the Thames, and must have amassed considerable property, having lands both in Essex and Marlow. Doubtless he was attracted to the latter place owing to his mother, Miss Hunt, having come from the neighbouring village of Radnage. He himself married Miss Coke, daughter and heiress of Richard Coke, of Melcombe-Regis, Dorset. Their eldest son died comparatively young from the effects of illness contracted in his exertions for saving people during the great floods of the Thames at Marlow in the year 1774. He was unmarried, and his next brother, Alexander—my grandfather—went to India in the service of the East India Company, no doubt under the advice of Stephen Higginson, one of the American branch, who at this time was Governor of Madras. Here as an advocate and subsequently Judge of the Supreme Court at Calcutta, Alexander had a successful career, returning to England at the age of five-and-forty with a considerable fortune. The prosperity of the family did not endure, for my grandfather, dying at the early age of forty-nine, left my grandmother a young widow with four sons and two daughters slenderly provided for, owing to imprudent investments.

My grandfather's only sister had married Mr. Langley, who owned property near Marlow which had been held by his family in a direct line since the days of Queen

Elizabeth. Their only child was the Rev. Thomas Langley, author of a work of permanent value on the antiquities and history of the Desborough Hundred of Buckinghamshire. His death in 1810 removed the last representative of his father's family, the Langley property devolving on my grandfather's elder son Alexander. Hence my own connection with Marlow.

This Alexander, after graduating at Christ Church, Oxford, entered the First Foot Guards (now the Grenadier Guards) in 1803. After serving continuously in the regiment for more than thirty years and attaining the command of the third battalion, he retired in 1840 and settled in his home at Marlow, dying unmarried in 1855.

My father, George Powell Higginson, while still a boy at Westminster acquired an early taste for a soldier's life, and, following his elder brother's example, was gazetted ensign in the First Foot Guards in 1805. Both brothers went with the Brigade of Guards to Sicily in 1806, and appear to have had many experiences there among the primitive inhabitants of Catania and Syracuse, which was their station for two years.

Except through the visits of ships of war the Sicilians had but slender knowledge of England and the English; nor does it seem quite clear what good result was derived from the long occupation by English troops of this important island, to secure which from French conquest would have required a far larger force than we were likely to maintain.

In returning from an excursion to Malta in a small felucca, my father and a brother officer were captured by the French privateer *Prince Jérôme*, and were carried

off to Tunis, where they were kept prisoners. They were well treated by the Bey, until, after a month's detention, they were released by exchange. I have a drawing by my father of the privateer, which was propelled by galley-slave rowers, as well as by the sails peculiar to the smaller vessels of that coast.*

They had hardly returned from Sicily when the two battalions of the First Foot Guards, in which my father and uncle were serving respectively, were ordered to Spain, and took part in Sir John Moore's campaign which terminated at Corunna.

I now turn to myself. In 1825 my father, then Lieutenant-Colonel in the Grenadier Guards, married Lady Frances Elizabeth Needham, second daughter of Francis, twelfth Viscount and first Earl of Kilmorey. I their only son, born in 1826, began life just at the period when the old order was changing and new conditions were beginning to replace the fashions and habits of our forefathers. My earliest recollections were limited to the contemplation of scenery from my nursery window in the house in Wilton Crescent, of which part of Belgravia my father was the first inhabitant, and I gazed with interest on the donkeys which were the sole occupants of fields and enclosures now effaced by Lowndes Square, Sloane Street being their western boundary. A huge brewery occupied the site of Albert Gate and the French Embassy, and Brompton was but a suburb. Looking westwards, no building of any importance lay beyond the Life Guards

* Fifty years later, when on my return from the Crimea, I passed within a few miles of the scene of my father's capture. I was on board a French line-of-battleship, which, by a strange coincidence, was named *le Prince Jérôme*.

Barracks, except Kingston House and Kent House, until one reached the Kensington Turnpike which spanned the great coach road close to the present site of the Albert Hall. It was unsafe to walk after nightfall along this dark thoroughfare unless well prepared to meet foot-pads, and it would have been very foolish to accept an invitation to dinner or party in the royal suburb of Kensington without being resolved to defend one's purse and person.

South of the Kensington High Road lay a wide irregular space known as the Kensington Gravel Pits, where now stand the great Museums of Art, Science, and Natural History, dominated by the ponderous dome of the Albert Hall. All the land now occupied by Queen's Gate, and westward as far as the hamlet of Hammersmith, was then parcelled out in well-cultivated farms and market gardens. Many years were to run before these far-western regions should become fashionable, depriving Mayfair of much of its monopoly of social and intellectual importance.

The future of Belgravia as a residential quarter was still a matter for speculation. Wedged in between St. George's Hospital and what is now Grosvenor Crescent was an establishment whereof the mean exterior and narrow dimensions accorded ill with its real importance to the Road, the Chase, and the Turf. This was Tattersall's Yard, now abandoned in favour of more spacious premises in the Brompton Road.

Eastward from our abode in Wilton Crescent, Hyde Park Corner, St. George's Hospital, Grosvenor Place, and Tattersall's Yard separated us from the sacred atmosphere of Mayfair, and the Guards Barracks was the only building

of importance which lay near us on the Knightsbridge Road. My childish delight in listening to the drums, fifes, and bugle calls echoing from these barracks (which stood on the site of the present schools and vicarage of St. Paul's, Knightsbridge) seemed to lead my inclination towards a soldier's career. I remember crying bitterly one morning as I tried in vain to keep step with the battalion crossing the Knightsbridge Road from this very barrack, my father riding at the head, and my admiration chiefly concentrated on the gold-laced jacket and overalls of the black bandsman, Francis, who beat the cymbals.

The deer had only recently been removed from Hyde Park, and the path by the side of Rotten Row was the usual limit of our daily walk. Not infrequently we passed the "great Duke" on his morning stroll from Apsley House, and the respectful pull which I made at my cap was always acknowledged by the lift of a forefinger to the brim of the Duke's hat. I remember, too, on one occasion being drawn by my nurse to the side of the path as a very young lady passed by with two or three attendants. She acknowledged our homage, but little did I think that this was Victoria, our future Queen.

In allusion to the Sovereign I can relate an incident which reminds me that five Sovereigns have reigned since I first saw the light, and that I have been honoured by the personal notice of each. The battalion of the Grenadier Guards of which my father was in command was stationed at Windsor in the early days of the year 1830. Walking with my nurse on the Frogmore Road, at that time open to the public, we met a portly personage driving a pony carriage with outriders. I can see even now his white

great-coat, broad-brimmed hat, and kindly face as he pulled up, and, bidding my nurse bring me up to the carriage, asked who I was. He patted me on my head, from which my cap had been duly removed, and added a few gracious words. Though I had barely numbered three years and a half, I have retained a very vivid recollection of having been thus presented to his Majesty King George the Fourth. As the King died within a few months, it is more than probable that few now survive who can recall his features and voice.

As we grew older, though still in our childhood, my sisters and I used to pass our summer afternoons under the elm trees in Kensington Gardens, and on more than one occasion King William the Fourth, driving through the Gardens to Kensington Palace, stopped his carriage to notice the picnic which we contrived to organise on the grass, having brought our afternoon supply of milk and biscuits with us. King William's manner was most genial and devoid of all that could alarm our youthful ideas of royalty. I only refer to these incidents as affording links with the past which connect the actualities of our own lives with the events of past generations. Though the chronicle of one's early life cannot be of much interest outside the family circle, it may serve to illustrate the rapid advance in science and art. For example, often have I watched with sympathy and amusement the nurse's efforts to strike a light with flint and steel and a tinder box. The water we drank was drawn by the footman from a pump in the square, the intermittent supply from the Water Company being doubtful. Gas in the houses was almost unknown; the old hackney coach and pair stood

where now the motor, hansom, or four-wheeler offer their ready services. Many men, especially country gentlemen, still wore top boots; and to see the coaches start from the White Horse cellar in Piccadilly was a treat which, under the explanatory guidance of my father, I fully enjoyed.

I can recall a certain May morning when the mail coaches drove in procession past the house of Lord Lichfield, then Postmaster General, in St. James's Square. The Holyhead Mail, the Quicksilver Mail, the North Road Mail—each and all distinguished by the brilliant condition of the teams and the workmanlike look of the coachmen, arrayed on this annual occasion in their new red coats. It was not unfrequent in those days for private owners of many carriage-horses to send a refractory or ill-broken horse for a week or a fortnight to "the Mail" for discipline.

A country visit involved serious preparation. The yellow chariot's springs were severely tried by the weight of "imperials," drop-boxes, and all the varied impedimenta which often made the post-boy declare that a pair of leaders would be necessary.

I recall a journey to Shropshire, travelling as I have described, when we all met to celebrate my grandfather's eighty-fourth birthday.* It was a great family gathering, and one of interest to me, as I do not remember ever seeing my grandfather afterwards. As a younger son he had adopted the army as his profession, and had seen much service both in the Low Countries and in North America, gaining distinction and also friendly regard from all with whom he associated. He was present at Bunker's Hill, etc., and finally, as a general officer, he was appointed

* Francis, twelfth Viscount and first Earl of Kilmorey, 1747-1832.

M. N. Verdham. Pour veines par votre lettre du 19.
prouvoir, après à nos manœuvres. Cela ne souffre aucune
difficulté, et il dépendra de vous de vous rendre ici, en
observant seulement de vous annoncer là où il convient, à
notre arrivée. Sur, le prié Dieu, qu'il vous ait, M. N. Verdham,
en sa sainte et digne garde
à Tint.
Le 21. Août 1785.

Adieu

au Lt. Colonel aux gardes de S. M. Britannique M. Verdham à Bristol.

FACSIMILE OF AUTHORITY TO ATTEND THE PRUSSIAN MANOEUVRES GRANTED TO COLONEL HONBLE. FRANCIS NEEDHAM.
SIGNED BY FREDERICK THE GREAT.

to a division during the Irish rebellion, and directed the operations at the battle of Arklow. It was alleged that the escape of a large body of rebels through an unguarded pass in the Wicklow mountains was the result of General Needham's neglect; even to the present day "Needham's Gap" is spoken of as the scene of a blunder. But it was afterwards asserted, and probably with truth, that the escape of the rebels was connived at by the general in command of the whole force, in order to avoid the massacre which might have ensued had the pass been guarded.*

General Needham's eldest brother, Thomas, while serving as an officer in the Third Guards, had met with an untimely death. During an agricultural dinner which took place at a well-known inn at Salt Hill, near Windsor, many of the guests were seized with sudden illness, all the symptoms of which pointed to poison. The actual cause was never ascertained, the probability being that it was not the result of design, but of defective cooking arrangements. The career of a promising young officer, as well as heir to a title, was thus sadly terminated. His picture by Gainsborough hung in the dining-room at Shavington, the family place in

* The following permission for this officer to attend the manoeuvres of the Prussian army is signed in autograph by Frederick the Great just a year before his death:—

"Mr. Needham. Vous désirez par votre lettre du 19 pouvoir assister à nos manoeuvres. Cela ne souffre aucune difficulté, et il dépendra de vous de vous rendre ici, en observant seulement de vous annoncer là où il convient, à votre arrivée. Je prie Dieu qu'il vous aît, Mr. Needham, en sa sainte et digne garde.

FREDERIC.

à Tintz, le 21 Aout, 1785,
au Lt.-Colonel aux gardes de S: M: Britannique à Breslau."

Shropshire, over a glass case containing his uniform, at which I used to gaze as a child. The next brother, Robert, succeeding eventually to the title and property, married a sister of the first Lord Combermere, but as he died childless in the year 1818, the title and estates devolved on Francis, the only surviving brother, my grandfather, who thus became twelfth Viscount, and subsequently, in 1822, was created first Earl of Kilmorey. He married Ann, one of the three beautiful daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Fisher, of Acton. Of the other two sisters, one married Mr. Vernon (whose son became Vernon Wentworth, inheriting the Strafford property in Yorkshire), and the third married her cousin, General Sir Henry Pigot, a younger brother of Sir George Pigot of Patshull. I have in my possession the journal of old Mrs. Fisher, in which she records events so remote as the first decade of the eighteenth century. She lived to a very great age. My chief reason for bearing her in affectionate memory lies in her having brought up my mother almost from her childhood. Mrs. Fisher appears in her widowhood to have entertained largely at her house in Wimpole Street, which was next door to that of Admiral Lord Hood; and to this must be attributed the happy accident to which my mother frequently alluded, that during her girlhood she was often called to the window to see Lord Nelson (the Little Admiral) running up the steps next door to visit his honoured friend. As my mother all but completed her hundredth year, dying in December, 1891, these peeps at Nelson, which could not have occurred later than 1803 (for Nelson was not on shore for nearly two years before

Trafalgar), may be of interest to those who care to recall "links with the past."

I like still to preserve in memory the simplicity of the life that we children led while on the many visits we paid both in Shropshire and Staffordshire. Partly owing no doubt to the difficulties of transport, all that we ate and drank came from the estate. The massive loaf of home-made bread would put to shame the flimsy representatives of the staff of life which decorate the modern breakfast-table. The sirloin and the saddle were supplied by beeves and wethers reared in the park. A glass of home-brewed beer was not thought to be an unsuitable beverage even for small children, and baked apples and batter puddings formed our second course; nor, as far as I can remember, was the fare of our elders much less primitive. A bowl of punch not unfrequently found its way to the dining-room; five o'clock tea was unknown except in the nursery or schoolroom, into which occasionally "grown-ups" intruded. During an afternoon visit to a country neighbour, the butler, instead of preparing a tea-table, handed round tiny glasses of liqueurs such as Paquareti, the very names of which are unknown to the present generation, but whose taste my youthful palate could only compare to the nectar of the gods. Shropshire and Cheshire were as famed for their packs of hounds then as they are in the present day. Even in his old age my grandfather was devoted to hunting; I can see him now in his long, red frock-coat and huntsman's cap sitting as firmly in his saddle as any young man. Shavington was a favourite meet, and the sporting records of that period make special reference to a notable day when the

combined packs of Cheshire and Shropshire met in friendly rivalry in Shavington Park. The boldest riders from both counties strove for the honour of their respective packs. I have read somewhere of John Mytton's reckless feat of horsemanship when shouting, "Now for the honour of Shropshire!" He rode at an impossible fence, horse and man falling on the other side defeated, but he refused to admit disgrace. My mother often spoke of having seen Jack Mytton, to whom, notwithstanding his prowess in the hunting-field, she took a great dislike owing to his ill-treatment of his wife during paroxysms of anger, which indicated madness induced by intemperance.

I can now see the dinner-table brightened by the red coats of all the guests, except the rector of the parish; and my grandfather insisted upon my having a red jacket made by the village tailor, so that I might not spoil the fox-hunting tradition of the house. I have worn and discarded many a red coat since those days, but the little red jacket is still in my wardrobe!

The house of Shavington occupied a fine position in a very large park, and was famed for its hospitality; which may account for a fact whereof I have kept a record that, when full, it burnt a ton of coal a day. Yet with all those luxuries, a bath-room was unknown, and a tub a rarity supposed to be only necessary for an invalid!

In the following year I went to school near Carshalton. I remember but little about this period, save that we witnessed from the schoolyard the glare of the great fire which reduced the Houses of Parliament to ashes; also that, in accordance with the custom prevailing at private schools of that day, we ate our pudding before our meat at

dinner. There were only eighteen of us, and, of those, I was only destined to meet in after life George Glyn, second Lord Wolverton, the bosom friend of Gladstone, and his brother St. Leger. As our families were well acquainted, we often passed cheery evenings together during the holidays.

On the appointment of Lord Hill as General Commanding-in-chief in 1828, that well known and most trusted of "the Duke's" friends named my father as one of his aides-de-camp, the duties of which post necessitated his retirement from the regiment on half pay. As a child I frequently accompanied him as he walked daily to the Horse Guards, and thus received kindly notice from many of the distinguished men who formed the General Staff. The old veteran, who was door-keeper at the Commander-in-chief's office, became my special friend. All these associations combined to strengthen my resolution to adopt a Guardsman's life, and perhaps discouraged any scholarly ambition that I might have developed. During these walks to the Horse Guards we not unfrequently met a most sober, gentlemanlike figure who bowed profoundly to my father's "How d'ye do"? This was Jackson the celebrated prize-fighter, who, long retired from the ring, kept gymnastic and fencing rooms in St. James Street.

Through the good-natured permission of Lord Hill I now and then followed the Commander-in-chief's Staff at inspections in Hyde Park, and shall never forget the scene of confusion which I and my pony created when, at a review of the Blues on the ground in front of Knightsbridge Barracks, my pony bolted into the midst of

the band, scattering the musicians, who were of course mounted, until we were captured and led away from the scene of disaster. The pony had been a gift from that most popular of men, Mr. Ambrose Isted, who had been most kind to me during the previous winter on my first appearance in the hunting-field in Northamptonshire. We then occupied a curious old house, Stoke Park, lent to my mother by her cousin, Mr. Frederick Vernon Wentworth. I received the customary initiation at the end of my first run with the Duke of Grafton's hounds at the hands of the late Lord Southampton, the pony in question having carried me well through a long run. There are, perhaps, a few friends still living who remember how Ambrose Isted, born deaf and dumb, was enabled by his remarkable power of observation and his charm of manner not only to articulate a few words, but to take his place in society. A hard rider to hounds, he was a frequent guest at Whittlebury where I first met him, and, with his devoted wife, born Miss Stopford, led the life of a country gentleman, greatly beloved by all who knew him.

Latterly my pony and I became frequenters of Rotten Row, and it may be interesting to the present generation to know that in those days the green enclosure studded with old elms, which formed the border of the Serpentine as far as Kensington Gardens, was open and much frequented by equestrians. Few people rode in the morning; the late afternoon was the hour when the best known people faultlessly turned out, both as regards costume and steed, attracted the notice of friends and admirers who preferred the less pretentious gravel walk. As my holidays were chiefly passed in London, my chances

of following hounds came few and far between, but I went through a pretty severe course of instruction in horsemanship at a riding-school in Halkin Street where a very stern old riding-master named Fozard, who, I believe, once had the honour of teaching the Queen, put me and a few other youngsters through a course of training which I shall never forget. The "kicking lesson" with both arms held back by a stick passed through the elbow joints was an ordeal, no doubt salutary, but generally resulting in a fall until a proper balance in the saddle had been acquired.

In 1836-37 I was one of forty other boys, some of whom I have counted among my friends, who were prepared for Eton at a well-known school—Dr. Procter's—at Brighton. His house stood then isolated, but now forms the corner house of Chichester Terrace, Kemp Town. Between us and what is now the Bristol Hotel lay open fields in one of which we played cricket and football. An occasional walk, two and two, into the town, afforded our only opportunity for visiting the neighbourhood of the Pavilion. Even at the time when I was at school many of the shops claimed, as if by right, the royal patronage, the Pavilion still remained a royal residence, and most of the great families regarded as rulers of society sought, in rather inferior lodging-houses, the refreshment of sea-breezes and gossip. Among my schoolfellows were three sons of Mr. Laurence and Lady Jane Peel who lived in Kemp Town hard by. The eldest, Charles, whom I knew well in later life, became Clerk to the Privy Council, and with both the others I maintained friendship, as also with Charles Magniac, member for Bedfordshire, and afterwards my brother-in-law.

My arrival at Dr. Procter's was preceded by an adventure still fresh in my memory. With the rest of my family I had been on a visit to my uncle General Campbell, then Governor of Jersey, and we were returning home through Normandy, intending so to reach Dieppe or Boulogne. At Caen we passed a night, and as we sat at dinner at the table-d'hôte my father whispered to me, "Take a good look at the gentleman sitting opposite." I noticed the not very striking features of, apparently, an Englishman who had nodded to my father. After dinner they foregathered, and an invitation to drink tea at his lodgings was made by the stranger and accepted. We passed a pleasant evening, I, of course, being merely a listener to the conversation, which turned upon days and events of which I knew little or nothing. Our host was Beau Brummell. He lived but a short time afterwards, and was already showing a failure in memory and general mental power. I doubt whether there are many living who can say that they passed an evening in company with one who for so long was the *arbiter elegantiarum* in the days of the Dandies. It is as well for society that, since his time, no similar pretender should have arisen; nor can we readily understand how a man of obscure origin, with hardly a claim to be educated or gifted with taste for aught but dress and the gaming-table, could have acquired the position in the world of fashion which he undoubtedly held. I remember but little of the conversation on the evening referred to; but Brummell appeared to talk without bitterness of the days of his intimacy with the Prince of Wales, and twice I heard him allude to the young Queen who had so lately succeeded to the throne as



GEORGE WENTWORTH HIGGINSON AT 11 YEARS OF AGE.

"this young Virginia," betraying thus the failure of his mental faculties. Years afterwards I was talking to the late Lord Lyndhurst, who of course knew him well, and he related an anecdote which illustrated Brummell's remarkable self-possession and readiness in repartee. Some one, who no doubt wished to disconcert him by allusion to his parentage, asked in the presence of some of his admirers, "Pray, Mr. Brummell, how are your good father and mother?" "Thank you," was the reply, "quite well, when I left them half an hour ago; but by this time they have probably cut their throats." "Good Heavens!" exclaimed several of the bystanders, "you must be speaking in joke." "Not at all," he said with a quiet tone of appreciation of the motives of his questioner, "they were eating peas with their knives."

After two years' experience of school life at Brighton, with all the happy unconsciousness of the realities which mark the change from a private to a great public school, I went to Eton in the year 1839.

Long before going to Eton I frequently visited the College, my mother's family being often at Datchet where my grandfather lived before succeeding his elder brother, my mother having been born in the old home still retaining the name of Datchet House, situated close to the churchyard where many of the Needham family are buried. I perfectly remember having been taken over to see Provost Goodall, the predecessor of Keate, and a frequent entertainer of George III. I particularly noticed his wig, which appeared to sit square on his face, and also a certain gold model of the College Chapel which stood on the table by his side in the long oak room where we

were received, and which I looked at with unabated interest, only a short time ago, while having luncheon with my good friend Provost Hornby, who had been in the same Remove with me while at Eton.

The time-honoured system, so long continued in full vigour by Keate, was beginning to yield to the reforming zeal of Dr. Hawtrey, certainly a man of the most cultivated talents and genial character of his day. But it is hard to contend with old customs and prejudices. During my first half, though I was placed in the Remove, I was the victim of relentless fagging. I seldom had time to snatch a morsel of breakfast, and began to learn thus early that, if success was to be attained in life, it must be achieved through self-reliance. Yet somehow I gloried in this first plunge into the world, and although I gained no special distinction during the five years of my time at Eton, though our education left us equal to composing indifferent verses in Greek and Latin, though Homer, Virgil, Horace, and the Greek Plays formed the entire course of our studies, we gathered and harvested certain principles and rules of life which sent us out into the world fairly equipped to face the struggle to which we should inevitably be committed.

I think I might have done more at Eton, and many who were at the same house would have agreed with me, if our tutor's * attitude towards us had been more sympathetic. He was just and kind, but he never invited one to a confidential talk, and appeared to consider any branch of education which did not lead to the Church,

* I was placed at the house of the Rev. C. Abraham, afterwards Bishop of Wellington, New Zealand, and later Canon of Lichfield.

and especially to the Mission-field, as a secondary consideration.

I remember my father suggesting I should learn German, and on telling this to my tutor, he replied, "Very useful thing to enable you to read the notes in the Greek Plays!"

Of my associates in my tutor's house few, alas, remain. How well I remember the gatherings in the evening—the merry interchange of what was often real wit and conversation sparkling with originality. And what varied careers awaited each and all of us. George Ward Hunt,* captain of the house, a future Chancellor of the Exchequer; Edward Stanley, my mess mate and particular friend, afterwards a well-known bibliophile and also M.P.; Dunkellin,† the brightest and most original of all, my comrade afterwards in the Crimea. He possessed much Irish geniality, combined with those solid qualities which he inherited from his grandfather, the great Canning, and would undoubtedly have gained high distinction as a statesman but for his untimely death. At the same time he was extremely modest, and I do not ever remember seeing him out of temper.

Then there were the three brothers Eliot, sons of the third Earl of St. Germans, the eldest of whom became an officer in the Life Guards, and died when a young man. The second, Granville, was one of my intimate friends; we both joined the Guards about the same time, he entering the Coldstream, I the Grenadiers.

* Died in 1877.

† Eldest son of the fourteenth Earl and first Marquess of Clanricarde. Died in 1867.

Our friendship, alas! was brought to an untimely close by his death at the Battle of Inkerman. I still remember, as if it happened but yesterday, during one of our rapid movements backwards and forwards during that eventful battle, finding his young brother, who had come up from the Fleet the night before to pay him a visit, standing over the dead body of poor Granville, paralyzed with grief and indifferent to danger. It was upon this lad that the earldom and estates of St. Germans devolved on the death of his elder brother, the fourth earl.

Henry Wyndham, afterwards Lord Leconfield,* was my fag. His brother Percy was then too young to have developed any of those qualities which raised him later into one of the most popular and cultivated men of his day. Andrew Cockerell, a merry lad, but apparently nothing more, became, as every one knows, one of the wittiest men in society. Wyndham Slade, and Fraser (afterwards Sir William)† who beneath an affectation of eccentricity and aloofness concealed as kind a heart as ever beat—all these have “joined the majority.” Sole survivor of them all, I turn my thoughts often to our gatherings, and realize now in my old age the buoyant spirit and irresponsibility with which we discussed the most serious questions of the day.

I must not forget, however, that the captain of the house when I first entered it was the present Lord Courtown, then Lord Stopford, afterwards my brother

* Second baron. Died in 1901.

† Fourth baronet of Ledecune, author of “Words on Wellington” and other works; not to be confounded with Sir William Fraser, the genealogist who died in the same year as Sir William of Ledecune, 1898.

officer in the Grenadiers, and still, I rejoice to say, enjoying life on his estates in Ireland.

So much has recently been written about Eton and Eton life in the "forties" that I only record those events in which I took a personal share.

My voice joined for the first time in an Eton cheer when Queen Victoria and Prince Albert drove through College on the day of their marriage and on their way to Windsor Castle. The birth of the Prince of Wales in 1841, not only made the 9th of November a day long to be remembered by all good Englishmen, but it marked an incident in our Eton life which, but for the tact and good sense of Dr. Hawtrey, the Head Master, might have seriously affected the future of the school. The time-honoured custom of holding a display of fireworks and the usual attractions of a country fair were in full force at Windsor on the 5th November. The fair was pronounced to be "out of bounds" and to the ordinary severe penalty there was added that any boy caught would be expelled. This last threat was greatly resented by the boys, and fully two hundred—of whom I was one—found their way to the Bachelor's Acre where the fair was held, and a war to the knife against authority was practically declared. Two boys were caught *flagrante delicto*, and their intended expulsion was announced on the following day. "Booing" and the throwing of squibs at 5 o'clock school gave strong evidence that the discipline would be hard to maintain. On the 7th we were summoned to the Upper School, and the Head Master ordered us all to write out a hundred lines and to bring in the results of our task at one and four o'clock daily, thus restricting our leisure hours. Shouts

of disapprobation echoed from all, so that no ringleader could be detected. On the morrow, the 8th, the same scene was repeated after the task had been doubled, and on that evening it seemed doubtful whether anarchy would not prevail in spite of threats and punishments. But on the 9th the news of the birth of the Prince was greeted by all England, and by none of the Queen's subjects more loyally than by the authorities and boys of the ancient foundation of Eton College. We were summoned to the Upper School, and in a few graceful words Dr. Hawtrey appealed to our better feelings and proclaimed an unqualified amnesty. So the incident which might have had serious consequences was happily closed, and from that day onwards the relations between masters and pupils have never been disturbed.

I was fortunate enough, through the kindness of an uncle who was a Canon of Windsor, to witness the procession to St. George's Chapel of the notable personages who attended the christening of the Prince of Wales, our late beloved Sovereign. I can especially recall the features of the King of Prussia, elder brother of the First Emperor William, of the old Duke of Sussex, of Alexander von Humboldt, and others whose names live in history.

The funeral of Lord Wellesley, the great Viceroy of India, which by his express desire took place at Eton, made a deep impression upon all of us. His love for the old College, illustrated almost at the last by his final contribution to the *Musae Etonenses*—*In gremium redeo tutus Etona tuum*—was not without effect on our young minds, not as yet sensible of the impulses which our apparently careless spirits were gaining amid these classic surroundings.

Of course the most notable figure among the mourners was the Duke of Wellington. I had nearly reached the sixth form in 1844, when we celebrated the last of the "Montems."

The last event which my memory retains very clearly, and which occurred within a few weeks of my leaving Eton, was the review held in Windsor Park in honour of Nicholas, Emperor of Russia, then on a visit to our Queen. Thanks to old friends of my father who were in command of the battalions of the Guards which took part in the review, I found a good place close to the Staff and the royal carriage. Certainly the Emperor Nicholas was the most imposing personality I ever saw. Very tall, well-proportioned, with features seldom relieved by a smile, he seemed to dominate all those around him, while now and then, with gestures full of deference and respect, he spoke to the Queen, by the side of whose carriage he rode.

Besides the Household Cavalry and four battalions of the Foot Guards, there were two batteries (then called troops) of Horse Artillery, and the 47th Regiment of the Line. Lord Combermere was in command. Owing to the health of our Queen, orders had been specially given by the Duke of Wellington, who, of course, was present, that the customary salute of twenty-one guns by the Artillery should be dispensed with. But, as not unfrequently happens, orders sent to everybody reached nobody, and no sooner was the Royal Standard "broken" on the flagstaff at the saluting-point than "Bang! bang! bang!" echoed from the right of the line. The Duke, who was on horseback alongside the Queen's carriage, was furious, and Staff Officers and A.D.C.'s were sent off at a gallop to stop the firing and summon the wretched officer in command

of the guns for an explanation. No orders whatever countermanding his regular instructions had been received by the poor man, and his explanation would have sufficed, but unfortunately the Duke, still greatly annoyed, bade him "take his guns away." "Where am I to take them, your Grace?" he asked timidly. "To hell, sir!" was the reply.

Some looked grave, others laughed, and among the latter no one with more kindly amusement than her Majesty. It was admitted that despite the general appearance and accurate movement of the troops present, the incompetency of the Staff, attributable solely to their want of practice and opportunities for training, rendered the movements and general display rather disappointing.

I had just attained my eighteenth birthday, and, being now a sixth form boy, bade farewell to Eton, a moderate scholar in Latin and Greek, with very imperfect knowledge of French and German, and, I confess with sorrow, a remarkably good opinion of myself and my abilities. My tutor scarcely veiled his regret that I had determined to be a soldier, a profession for which my classical education seemed to him to be an unnecessary equipment. But I was resolute; and when, six months later, I found myself gazetted Ensign and Lieutenant in the Grenadier Guards, much of the pride and satisfaction I enjoyed was heightened by a resolve that, whatever my career might be, it should bring no discredit on the dear old school. As it chanced to fall out I was quartered at Windsor the following summer, and thus was able to maintain the permanence of the link which draws so many old Etonians towards the scenes of their boyhood.

CHAPTER II

THE GRENADIER GUARDS

1845-1850

I HAVE touched on the pride I felt at realizing that I was a Grenadier, and can claim that the feeling was justified. On my first visit to report myself as appointed to the second battalion, then stationed at the Tower of London, I was welcomed by the veteran quartermaster with the following words: "Glad to see you, very glad! I was your father's colour-sergeant at the battle of Corunna." The years from 1809, the date of Sir John Moore's memorable retreat, ending with his death, to 1845, when I joined, included the whole of the Peninsular War and the Waterloo campaign, and here was the old quartermaster, none the worse for his varied services, a grand example of the men of that generation who rose from the ranks. I have in my possession the two letters written by my father and his elder brother, Colonel Alexander Higginson, to their widowed mother on the evening of that eventful day after the defeat of the French, the death of Sir John Moore, and while waiting for the order to embark. Very little allusion is made in either letter to the trials, privations, and frequent engagements in which they had taken their share during sixteen days of a retreat conducted under most trying conditions. They

were Ensigns in different battalions (the 2nd and 3rd First Foot Guards), and my uncle alludes to my father thus: "I saw George in the distance looking very pompous as he carried the King's colour in the action." So lightly did the youngsters bear their burden of privation and danger in those days! However, during the voyage to England my father was prostrated by fever contracted, no doubt, during the retreat, and his condition must have been critical on landing, as he often spoke of his having been carried in a blanket by four men of his company in search of lodgings at Portsmouth, and at more than one met with this refusal, "We don't take in dead men!" He had barely regained his strength when his battalion was ordered to take part in the Walcheren expedition, during which disastrous campaign he fell a victim to a bad attack of the fever which decimated the ranks of probably the finest army which had ever been sent from our shores. From the time of his recovery his constitution never regained the vigour and elasticity to which his tall, well-proportioned frame entitled him. He subsequently served in the Peninsula, commanding the detachment of the First Foot Guards which formed part of the storming party at the final siege of St. Sebastian, of which important event he frequently spoke to me, but always with extreme self-effacement, though I well knew of the brilliant example he gave to his men. With the First Foot Guards he shared in the actions in the Pyrenees, the advance into France, including the battles on the Nive and the Nivelle, and the passage of the Adour.

The peace of 1814, rudely interrupted by the events of the Hundred Days, found us, as usual, unprepared for

immediate active service. My father's battalion was under orders for embarkation to form part of Wellington's army destined to meet and overthrow the great Emperor; but at the last moment, and in violation of all precedent, another battalion was substituted. The battalion was commanded by Colonel Arthur Upton, a brother of Lord Templetown, and a great personal friend of the Duke of York. The much coveted post of attaché to Marshal Blücher's army was offered to Colonel Upton, so the Duke of York, at the very last moment, substituted another battalion in order to enable this officer to accept the appointment. This sudden change called for much unfavourable comment, violating, as it did, all the rules which guided the succession of battalions on the roster for active service.

For this reason neither my father nor his brother were present at Waterloo; but the former joined with a draft during the march to Paris, and witnessed all the stirring incidents which followed the final overthrow of Napoleon. Much has been written by eyewitnesses and chroniclers concerning the occupation of Paris by the allied armies immediately after the second return of Louis XVIII., and from the many personal reminiscences which I heard from my father's lips it is evident that *la Ville Lumière* very soon became reconciled to the presence of so large a gathering of strangers who were quite ready to exchange the stern demeanour of the invader for *entente cordiale* with a new acquaintance. "Notre ami l'ennemi" was the lively watchword of the restaurants and the tradesman on the Boulevard, and except from the irreconcilable representatives of the old Napoleonic army, our people were

received with cordiality. But trouble now and then arose, and my father gave me a graphic account of his having been in command of a fatigue party of the Guards ordered to assist at the packing of art treasures in the Louvre, part of the spoil exacted by the Emperor from various well-known galleries in Europe for the farther adornment of his capital. The French naturally resented, and indeed so resolutely resisted this restoration of masterpieces as insisted on by the allies that the British soldiers' aid was called for, and my father watched with much interest this, the first step, towards the return journey of the "Transfiguration," and if I recollect rightly, "The Sistine Madonna." Beauvilliers and the Café Vèrey were the restaurants most frequented, and the gaming-tables in the Palais Royal offered temptations to the unwary which led to the downfall of many a misguided visitor. Blücher and his Prussians were nearly uncontrollable for a time, and the threats of the old Marshal to blow up the Pont de Jéna became so violent that the Duke of Wellington removed the entire Prussian force to the suburbs.

Many years after all these events I was standing with my father at the corner of the Rue Royale and the Rue Saint Honoré. Remarking on the very slight changes that the scene presented since the days of the army of occupation, he said—

"How well I remember marching down that street (Saint Honoré) from our quarters in the Champs Elysées in command of the Guard ordered to relieve the Prussians at the Palais Royal, all the excitement as our band came thundering past this very crossing, and then my formal relief of the Prussian Guard drawn up at the palace

gateway in accordance with all the customary formalities. During the relief of the sentries the Prussian Captain and I exchanged many civil words, and finally, just before marching off with his men, he popped into my hand, with a smile and a knowing wink, a little card inscribed 'Madelle. XXX., Rue So-and-so—*charmante personne!*' " They must have been merry times. His account of their subsequent life at Cambrai, which was the headquarters of the army of occupation for nearly three years, afforded no special interest, except hunting with the Duke of Wellington's hounds and the many visitors, from England.

Returning home on the withdrawal of the army of occupation from France in 1818, my father resumed duty with the regiment, attaining to the rank of first major. He related to me an interesting but somewhat gruesome story of an occurrence which took place when he was in command of a detachment of his regiment (then stationed in the Tower of London) which was held in reserve at Newgate on the day of the execution of Thistlewood and two of his associates in the Cato Street conspiracy. I need not refer to this attempt on the lives of the Ministry of the day further than to note that the sentence on these men included the exercise of the office of "headsman" after that of hangman. The possibility of a riot or some demonstration had justified the precaution of employing troops, which, however, were carefully concealed within the prison. Their services were not required, and, the execution having taken place, the Governor of the gaol invited the officers in command of the Guards on duty to breakfast. While they ate and drank with strained efforts

at conversation a servant entered hurriedly and addressed the Governor in a whisper. After much hesitation the Governor, in a loud voice, exclaimed, "You may take it, but you cannot expect me to use it again." The servant took the largest carving knife from the sideboard, its services being required to aid the headsman in completing his horrible task.

I have alluded to my father being one of Lord Hill's A.D.C.'s, and none of my earlier recollections afford me greater pleasure than those of this distinguished veteran, the most trusted of the great commanders who served Wellington so well during the Peninsular and Waterloo campaigns. He frequently honoured me by his notice, and the gentle friendly expression which his countenance always bore dispelled any feeling of shyness, causing me to forget that this quiet old country gentleman had been the hero of Almaraz and Arroyo de Molinos, and had held his own for many hours against Marshal Soult on the banks of the Nive, probably the most brilliant of his achievements. While still an Eton boy I accompanied my people on a visit to Hawkstone, the well-known family home of the Hills, the head of the house being Sir Rowland, the eventual successor to his uncle's peerage. Both Lord Hill and Lord Combermere were of the party, and the deference shown by the Shropshire neighbours to both these representatives of their county, made a lasting impression on me, and, I need hardly add, strengthened my resolution to follow a soldier's career. Lord Combermere lived to a great age,* and I was often at his house in London after I was in the Guards. He

* Died in 1865, aged ninety-two.

retained to the last the erect bearing of a cavalry leader. No better epitaph could keep green the memory of Lord Hill than the words which he himself gave utterance to on his deathbed, "I do not believe that I leave an enemy in this world."

Among the subordinate companions of "the Duke," I knew very well in his old age Sir James Kempt, who, as General commanding a division, gained much distinction. His stories of the battle of Maida, at which as a youngster he had been present, were most interesting. Among others he related how that he overheard the general in command, while watching the French advance, their drums beating vigorously, "plan-plan-rataplan," say quietly to the troops formed to receive them, "We'll give ye some tom-te-tom-tom, my boys ! "

I cannot quit the subject of these great soldiers whose services were rendered to their country more than a century ago without a tribute to the modesty, simplicity, and yet absolute truthfulness which impressed those of a younger generation who had the privilege of meeting them and gaining knowledge from their experiences. None that I ever met, except, perhaps, the first Lord Hardinge, could attribute their success to high classical attainments, scientific acquirements, or close study of modern languages. Yet all seem to have gained that amount of mental training which, combined with self-reliance and devotion to their chief, enabled them to face, and in most cases overcome, all difficulties. Once I had the honour of acting as A.D.C. at the camp at Chobham to Lord Seaton, who was General in command. His services in command of the 52nd in the Peninsula and again at

Waterloo, place him in the first rank of the representative soldiers of his day. Nothing impressed me more than his dignified presence and clear manner in issuing orders and instructions though he was already well advanced in years; nor do I forget the tall well-knit figure of General Macdonnell entering our mess room at Windsor one evening in response to our invitation to dinner. The name of this gallant officer who, assisted by Sergeant Graham, closed the gates of Hougoumont at a critical moment during the stubborn defence of that important post, will never be forgotten by the Coldstream Guards, to which regiment he belonged. To have seen and conversed with men whose distinction was won more than one hundred years ago suggests many thoughts grateful to my memory and perhaps will be accepted by my readers as worthy of record.

Two other links which carry me back much further, well into the eighteenth century, fall into the chain of reminiscences. At the banquet held in 1860 to commemorate the two-hundredth anniversary of raising the First Regiment of Foot Guards, H.R.H. the Prince Consort, then our colonel, presided, the use of the great banqueting hall at St. James's Palace having been specially granted by the Queen. Lord Combermere, responding for the toast of the Household Cavalry, secured the rapt attention of his audience by telling them how he had been present as a young aide-de-camp at the battle of Lincelles, fought in 1793, where the Guards were the only British troops engaged. The name "Lincelles" is the earliest, after the days of Marlborough, now borne on their colours.

To a period still more remote I can refer. Marshal Thomas Grosvenor, who lived to a very advanced age,* was dining at the "Guard" dinner at St. James's during the days when I was a young subaltern, and the conversation having turned on early reminiscences, he quietly remarked, "It is all very well for you youngsters to talk of what you remember, but I was a subaltern on the Bank Guard during Lord George Gordon's riots." This notable event in our history took place in 1780, and I am writing in 1916!

Little did I think when I joined the second battalion at the Tower in 1845 that, years afterwards, I should as Lieutenant of the Tower have the care of the great storehouse of historic events which this Palace Fortress includes within its ramparts. Under the rather stern guidance of the adjutant James, better known as "Jimmy," Lindsay† I soon passed my examination in drill and was pronounced fit for duty. The following autumn we were quartered at Windsor, and thus within less than a year I was again amid old Eton scenes and memories. After that, life in London offered all its attractions, into which I was not thrown as a stranger, my father's house and all the advantages of home life being always open to me. Balls, theatres and country visits relieved the not over arduous duties even of a subaltern, and although the news of the victories of Moodkee, Fero-seshah, Aliwal and Sabraon reminded us that our army

* Died in 1851.

† Second son of the twenty-fourth Earl of Crawford; became Lieutenant-General and K.C.M.G. At the time of his death, in 1874, he was Military Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief.

was not destined to remain unemployed, there seemed to be no prospect of our being engaged in an European conflict. Subsequently I was honoured by the acquaintance of both Lord Gough and Lord Hardinge, and from the lips of the latter heard many interesting anecdotes of the Sikh war.

In 1846 I was on a visit in the neighbourhood of Birmingham during the Musical Festival, and bear in vivid remembrance the first representation in this country of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, the orchestra being conducted by the composer himself. Never was there a more complete triumph. Madame Sontag was the principal singer. Another incident about this time, of more interest perhaps to soldiers, was the raising of Wyatt's statue of the Great Duke on the summit of the arch at the top of Constitution Hill. If I recollect rightly the removal of it to another site was contemplated, but, on the plea that such action would be disrespectful to the Duke, the project was abandoned.

In 1847 I accompanied my father to Kissingen, and afterwards to Ischl. While at the latter delightful spot we met one afternoon, on the mountain side, a *chaise-à-porteur* flanked by two *laquais* in uniform. The occupant was the Empress Marie Louise, widow of Napoleon I. Though neither interesting nor amiable, the Empress supplied a link with the past which no written history could yield. Returning home, we halted for a few days at Munich, already the chief nursery of modern art under the fostering care of the eccentric, though intellectual, King Louis. His eccentricities were already beginning to arouse scandal in consequence of the influence which the

adventuress Lola Montez was obtaining over the aged monarch. At the table d'hôte of our hotel I sat next to her at dinner, not knowing who she was; between us on the floor was an ice pail with a bottle of champagne in it. A sudden quarrel with her neighbour, a Bavarian officer in uniform, occurred, and with a violent application of her foot she sent the bucket and the champagne flying to the end of the room. After her short career under old King Louis's protection she left Munich in consequence of the popular indignation, came to England and married an officer in the Life Guards, Captain Heald, whom I knew, having been at Eton with him. That their life together was not unclouded may be inferred by his confession to a friend of mine that she had tried to stab him with a dagger which she always carried about with her. In connection with this marriage the following riddle was composed: Why is a cavalry officer like a pair of shoes in the making? Because he is already heeled, well soled, and would soon be welted.

A far more interesting lady, and one in every way worthy of honour, made her *début* at Munich during my stay there. Jenny Lind, as yet unknown in England, was already, though little more than eighteen years old, holding her audience enthralled by the purity and freshness of her voice. I well remember the effect of some of her notes as she made her first appearance in the *Son-nambula* at the opera house.

Writing as I am in old age I cannot refrain from allusion to the great change in appreciation of operatic music which places the taste of the present generation so completely out of sympathy with that of their forefathers.

In my early days the operas of Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, besides the later Meyerbeer, and occasionally the classic Beethoven and Mozart, gave us sufficient enjoyment, and we sang, whistled and marched to the familiar tunes which seemed to haunt our uneducated ears at any and all hours of the day. Perhaps we were easily satisfied, and unskilled in the due appreciation of real music, and the mysteries of modern technique, but I must admit that I cannot become reconciled to the absence of tune and time which to me seems to mark the more recent compositions for the operatic stage. Grisi, Alboni, Persiani, Titiens, Jenny Lind were our heroines—Mario, Gardoni, Tamburini, Lablache, our heroes—among many others whose names I cannot for the moment recall. Even our English operas drew us often to Drury Lane, where *The Bohemian Girl* offered a good supply of easy airs for the *petite voix de tenor* of the drawing-room amateur.

I was fortunate early in life in having heard the great actors as well as singers of a well-nigh forgotten age. While boating on the Lake of Como, about the year 1843, the brilliant notes of an unseen singer arrested our attention as we rowed past a lakeside villa. Our boatman, pointing to the open window, said, “E la Signora Catalani chi canta.” Even in her retirement the well-known prima donna retained her gift of song. Probably neither the last nor preceding generation ever heard her. Without underrating the talents of the more celebrated actors and actresses of whom our English stage can boast, the lasting impression which the great French *sociétaires* created on their audience seems still to vibrate in memory. As an Eton boy I was at Paris when Mlle. Mars, the

immediate follower if not the contemporary of Duchesnois and Mlle. Georges, returned to the stage for a few weeks. Though she was long past the age when youthful movement could add charm to the perfection of art, I shall never forget her performance in *Valerie* or the *Blind Girl* said to have been one of her best rôles. Rachel I saw frequently in the time of her highest achievement. What an actress! What an expressive countenance! Of the men, Bouffet, Arnal, Lafont, Bressant, Delaunay and, later, Mounet Sully and the Coquelins seemed to throw a delicacy and refinement into the parts that they were interpreting which we now look for in vain. I never saw John Kemble nor the elder Kean, though as a lad I first saw *Hamlet* performed by Charles Kemble, and subsequently by all the great actors who succeeded him. But neither in reference to the dramatic stage, nor that on which my own part in life was to be performed, do I desire to be considered *laudator temporis acti*.

In 1848 the revolutionary spirit which drove Louis Philippe from his throne gave cause for anxiety to all the governments in Europe, and even our peaceful England did not escape. From our quiet life at Chichester, then a Guards quarter, we were suddenly summoned to London to form part of the large body of troops gathered under the command of the Duke of Wellington to maintain law and order which were threatened by the speeches and attitude of Feargus O'Connor and his associates. To frustrate their avowed intention to march to the House of Commons from their place of meeting on Kennington Common all the bridges were held by troops. My battalion was brought up by train on the 9th April, and, there

being no barracks available, proceeded at once to Millbank Prison, then better known as the Penitentiary. The prisoners were doubled up in their cells, and for a full week we enjoyed incarceration, not, however, being condemned to prison fare, for the men were never better fed. On the morning of the 10th April we started at five o'clock and marched, without drums or fifes, to Somerset House where, in company with a squadron of the Blues, a troop of Horse Artillery and a company of Marines, we passed a somewhat wearisome day, for no symptom of riot or disturbance enlivened the Metropolis. So admirable were the arrangements and precautions made and taken by the "Great Duke" that the positions of all the troops were carefully concealed, and no military demonstration was made during the day. At nightfall, all being reported quiet, we embarked in two steamers from the steps under the great river archway, still to be seen from the embankment, which did not then exist, and before 10 p.m. we were back in our prison cells at Millbank.

In no way did the impending change in habits and customs betray itself more clearly than in our dress, and I cannot conclude my chronicle of the 'forties without a comparison between the costume of the early days of Queen Victoria's reign and that which at present prevails. Standing nowadays at the end of Rotten Row next Hyde Park Corner, the noticeable figures are so disguised in the rough suits of country gentlemen, that it might almost be supposed they desired to defy the conventionalities of London life. The short, close-fitting skirt from which the riding-boot protrudes, and the "billycock" or straw hat of the lady rider, would seem more appropriate to the

hunting-field than to Rotten Row. Whether this indifference to the criticizing gaze of the humble pedestrian is affected or real, I cannot pretend to judge; but remembering, as I do, the days when a well-appointed cabriolet or cab—as it was called—drew up in the open space fronting Apsley House, towards four o'clock in the afternoon, and its carefully attired owner, consigning the reins to a “tiger,” proceeded to mount his hack, which seemed as much at home as his master in the gradually increasing crowd of well-known members of society, I cannot regard the change as otherwise than revolutionary.

Almost every day one might see old Lord Anglesey, accompanied by one if not two of his sons, the buff trouser fitting so perfectly to the high-heeled boot that to decide which leg gripped the saddle or which had been left on the field of Waterloo was well-nigh impossible. A blue coat and gilt buttons, full black silk neckcloth and tall broad-brimmed hat completed his figure.

Count d'Orsay, certainly the handsomest man of his day, would startle his host of imitators by the carefully prepared and wondrous results of his tailor's efforts. Whether in the Row or on foot, no other headgear than a tall hat would have been tolerated on a man; the skirts of the ladies' habits nearly touched the ground, while a flowing veil not unfrequently broke the outline of their headgear. No pace beyond a canter was indulged in, and it would almost seem as if society had merely brought to the promenade in the Park the polished manners and studied proprieties of the ball-room or assembly. For a man to smoke in the presence of a lady would have been equivalent to an unforgivable slight,

nor was a cigar considered other than a luxury. The only pipe ever spoken of was the familiar meerschaum, and not even the example of the old Duke of Sussex—an inveterate smoker—converted the youth of our day to the adoption of a luxury, now considered a necessity of life. It may sound incredible but the Captain of the Queen's Guard at St. James's Palace concluded his daily report with his signed certificate that "no smoking had taken place in any of the rooms." *

On first joining the Guards a young officer at once became a member of the Guards' Club, but the smoking-room was a separate institution involving a separate annual subscription, and the earliest advice of a commanding officer to a subaltern given in kindly language was, that membership of the smoking-room was not desirable. Verily the cigarette has wrought notable change in this view of society! These restrictions gave way, however, after the death of the Duke of Wellington, and I can remember when Lord Frederick Paulet,† on duty as Captain of the Queen's Guard, St. James's, declined any longer to sign the anti-smoking certificate, the non-observance of which became general.

* No doubt this was in compliance with a General Order issued by the Duke of Wellington when Commander-in-Chief in 1845: "G.O., No. 577. The Commander-in-Chief has been informed that the practice of smoking, by the use of pipes, cigars and cheroots, has become prevalent among the Officers of the Army, which is not only in itself a species of intoxication occasioned by the fumes of tobacco, but, undoubtedly, occasions drinking and tipping by those who acquire the habit; and he intreats the officers commanding Regiments to prevent smoking in the Mess Rooms of their several Regiments, and in the adjoining apartments, and to discourage the practice among Officers of Junior Rank in their Regiments."—Ed.

† Fifth son of thirteenth Marquess of Winchester. Died in 1871.

Until quite late in the 'forties a white tie in the evening was unknown. Evening dress consisted of a long black satin cascade adorned with two pins connected by a chain, a black velvet or richly embroidered satin waistcoat, black or blue coat with high collar, and blue or buff trousers. Long hair was encouraged, and the great barbers of the day had a far more anxious time than the Figaro of the present, who close crops his victim like a convict at Dartmoor. My own particular attendant operating upon me one day observed with some pride, "I cut the Duke of Wellington, sir, yesterday." "Indeed," said I, "did he make any remark?" "His Grace," he replied, "said, 'Cut it short'." The only notable figure who retained the top boots of his forefathers was old Sir Francis Burdett, but the tightly strapped trouser over the Wellington boot was *de rigueur* for him who made his daily promenade in Piccadilly and St. James's Street.

The bow window at White's was still the privileged haunt of dandies of the old school, a race rapidly becoming extinct, and with their decline the prestige of White's gradually dwindled. The glories of Crockford's were on the wane, as was wittily said, "All the ready-money of England had been absorbed in it"; but still, in the not far-distant regions of Bennet Street, there were carefully-guarded green tables where too free an indulgence in hazard brought many a good fellow to the verge of ruin.

The opera, confined until the early 'fifties to Her Majesty's Theatre in the Haymarket, was so completely under the control of the subscribers and proprietors of

boxes, that the selection of artists and operas was guided, not so much by a desire to encourage either art or talent, as to minister to the taste of the day, until its rival at Covent Garden opened the field for the encouragement of new artists and works hitherto unknown.

Drury Lane Theatre offered few attractions with the exception, perhaps, of Balfe's opera of *The Bohemian Girl*, while at the Haymarket Bulwer Lytton's plays, *The Lady of Lyons* and *Money*, drew appreciative audiences to enjoy the incomparable acting of the elder Farren, Mrs. Sterling, Charles Mathews, and Macready. In short, our places of amusement were but few in number compared with those of the present day.

Hurlingham was a private villa, where a pleasant hostess occasionally gave parties; and many a lively afternoon have I passed at Lady Shelley's villa, which adjoined Hurlingham, meeting nearly every Saturday most of the people of one's London acquaintance.

Descending lower in the social scale, I recall, not however with special pride, frequent visits to Vauxhall, those old gardens to which Horace Walpole so often refers as the fashionable resort of the fine ladies of his day. It would be difficult now to point out the site of the gardens, which lay close to the south end of old Vauxhall Bridge. Frequently we formed processions of hansom cabs, so aptly described by Disraeli as the "gondola of London," and, starting from the Guards' Club, joined in the whirl of visitors who still kept up the convivial scenes which Thackeray describes with such amusing vividness in *Vanity Fair*. The pavilion of the orchestra remained in its faded grandeur, third-rate singers trolled forth

ballads and songs from popular operas ; a very good band invited the adventurous efforts of those who claimed proficiency in the newly-imported polka or valse ; the old balcony, divided into boxes for supper parties, still encircled the gardens, and obsequious waiters provided indifferent refreshments at exorbitant prices.

Nor were more athletic sports neglected. On more than one occasion, after an early field-day in Hyde Park, have I exchanged uniform for a boating-jacket, and, driving in haste to Whitehall stairs, joined three or four brother officers at that time-honoured landing-place on the eastern side of Whitehall gardens, and rowed up to Battersea fields, our four-oar being steered by our own waterman. Here we had breakfast in an old-fashioned riverside tavern called the Red House, which stood in what is now Battersea Park not far from Chelsea Bridge. On Sundays an eight-oar of the Brigade would pull in good Eton style to Putney Bridge and dine at the well-known inn, the Bells, contenting themselves with the simplest fare, consisting of cold lamb, salad and cider cup, as the return journey after dark did not admit of either reckless rowing or careless steering. Occasionally the same crew of eight oars rowed down stream to the Trafalgar at Greenwich, indulging in the fish dinner for which it was celebrated ; but the return voyage through the crowded mass of shipping was not accomplished without risk. This otherwise pleasant excursion was discontinued after the sad death of our favourite waterman who, two or three years later, through an error in judgment, brought a four-oared crew into serious danger at Vauxhall Bridge, involving the complete destruction of the boat, the rest of

the crew with difficulty saving themselves by swimming ashore. This caused the rowing members of the Brigade to found the Club at Maidenhead where it now flourishes.

Of Sport—a word so comprehensive nowadays—I was not qualified to say much more than that I was a decent shot in the old muzzle-loading days when two hundred pheasants was thought to be a good bag. I do not think the contrast between the old muzzle-loader and the present weapon can be fully understood by the present generation. The powder flask in the right-hand pocket, the wads in a tiny side pocket, the shot belt slung over the left shoulder and the loading rod hanging from the top button of the shooting jacket, formed an equipment which would puzzle the brilliant performer of the present day, whether at the hot corner of the cover or the well-protected shelter of the butt on the grouse moor.

As the mowing-machine was but a recent invention, imported, I believe, from America, the stubbles still afforded protection to the young broods, and partridge driving was unknown; the pointer and setter still ranged the turnip-field, and the sandwich and flask provided sufficient luncheon for those who were not afraid of a long tramp.

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CHAPTER III

FOREIGN TRAVEL AND HOME SERVICE

1850-1852

It was in the year 1850 that, having obtained six weeks' leave from Chichester, where I was quartered, I made a somewhat adventurous journey into the north of Italy.

I had heard and read much of Marshal Radetsky's campaign, which ended in the brilliant victory of Novara on 23rd March, 1849, and the abdication of King Charles Albert of Sardinia. My father had met at the baths of Kissingen General Lichnowsky, who commanded the Austrian Division at Verona; he had invited my father to pay him a visit, which had been declined on account of ill health; but on hearing from my father that I, his only son, was in the Guards, he was good enough to extend his invitation to me. Without any official introduction, I procured an ordinary passport and began my trip by crossing the Channel from Portsmouth to Cherbourg in a yacht of 20 tons, owned by an old friend, Welbore St. John; * who being a thoroughly competent skipper, was content with a crew of two hands, my humble services being also impressed for the occasion.

Notwithstanding fog and being becalmed for some hours, we found ourselves on the second day at anchor inside the *digue* at Cherbourg, where a fleet was assembled

* Died in 1853.

and the town *en fête* in honour of the Prince President, who was making his first visit to this naval stronghold. Invitations to a luncheon on the flagship and a ball at the Préfecture followed. Dancing till a very late hour, I only just returned on board in time to pack my uniform (no easy task in a 20-tonner rolling at anchor) and reach the quay in time to catch the steamer for Havre. It was blowing so heavily as we rounded Cape la Hogue that all on board, including the captain, were prostrate, and we arrived so late I had great difficulty in finding a lodging for the night at Havre. Travelling rapidly through Paris to Lyons, I there quitted the railway and journeyed in a ramshackle diligence through unknown regions to Belley, a town on the frontier of Savoy. Here began the first of my adventures. The Savoyard custom-house officials, never having seen an English officer, examined my red coat with considerable interest, and when they came to the epaulettes, with grave suspicion. The "glands," or gold tassels, of the Guards' epaulettes of those days, were as heavy as those of a general officer in any Continental army. Glancing alternately at my youthful features, and the distinction in rank indicated by the epaulette, they apparently decided that I must be an impostor. In vain I protested, pointing to my passport, until the officer commanding a detachment of Piedmontese troops, which formed the garrison, was brought into council and allayed the apprehensions of the *douaniers*. I passed the evening with the friendly commandant, his knowledge of French being about equal to mine of Italian; yet we became excellent friends, and at parting next morning he warned me that I should

have further trouble at the frontier of Lombardy, where martial law prevailed.

His warning proved to be well founded. In accordance with the prohibition to carry arms of any kind, my sword was promptly annexed, notwithstanding that I was on my way to the headquarters of the Marshal at Verona; and I was referred for any further explanation to the authorities at Milan. On arriving there my further protest was civilly ignored, and I somewhat foolishly spoke of the indignity to which I had been subjected while dining at table d'hôte in the hotel. I was immediately surrounded by a sympathizing crowd of Italians, themselves suffering from the arbitrary methods of Austrian martial law. I was glad to get away, and proceeded with as little delay as possible to Verona, hoping that my letter of introduction to General Lichnowsky would relieve me from the humiliating position in which I found myself. Though extremely cordial in his reception of me, he did not encourage me to consider the episode entirely concluded, my visit not having been officially authorized by the Foreign Office or military authorities. "At the same time," said he, "the question of uniform is of no importance; the Marshal has just gone to Mantua on a tour of inspection, and the manoeuvres in this neighbourhood will consequently not take place. Meanwhile you will, I hope, join my officers, whom you meet daily at dinner in this hotel, and consider yourself one of my suite during your visit here."

I passed a very pleasant week with his staff and the officers of a Hungarian regiment, besides visiting the well-known sights of that most interesting city. At

the same time I could not avoid noticing a certain coldness in any allusion to England, for which I could not account; till one day in conversation my neighbour, alluding to some event, remarked: "Nous étions en ce moment là sous les ordres du Général Haynau, un brave homme que vous avez si bien traité à Londres." I at once recalled the unfriendly, not to say hostile, reception accorded to General von Haynau when visiting one of the great breweries in London only a few weeks previous, in the belief, which I believe to have been unfounded, that he had been guilty of atrocities in the late campaign against the insurgents in Hungary.

The principal object of my visit not having been attained, and receiving the assurance that my sword would be returned to me at Milan, I went on to Venice for a few days. Though still under Austrian rule, Venice retained all the attractions it possessed in the days of the Doges. No steamer or motor-boat disturbed the placid waters of the Grand Canal, the gondola affording the only means by which this "city in the sea" could be visited. Danieli's was the only recognized hotel from which the Piazza San Marco could be reached on foot; no huge P. and O. steamer at anchor in the Lagoon obscured the view of the Islands and the "Salute"; the Lido was uninhabited, save for a few fishermen's huts, and families who could boast of doges amongst their ancestors, still inhabited the palaces, whose grandeur had hardly yet shown symptoms of decay.

Returning to Milan, I applied at once for my sword, intending to start the next day for Genoa. I had just finished dinner when a staff-officer presented himself,

and most courteously restored to me my much prized weapon. While rather nervously thanking him I unfastened the travelling cover in which he had brought it, thus revealing the hilt. The sword-knot was missing, having evidently been cut off. It was impossible to avoid a remark upon this additional indignity to which an English officer had been exposed. As aide-de-camp to the Governor, he expressed the great distress his Excellency would feel at this unfortunate occurrence, and asked me to describe as nearly as I could the missing ornament. At that time our sword-knots were of somewhat elaborate workmanship, showing the cipher V.R. embroidered on velvet. Carefully noting my description, he inquired at what hour I should leave next morning. I replied that the diligence left at 9 o'clock for Pavia, where I should cross the frontier and be no longer exposed to future discourtesy. We parted, however, on very friendly terms, and I tried to forget the somewhat painful incident. The next morning while I sat at a hasty breakfast before my departure, the aide-de-camp reappeared, carrying an *écrin* in his hand, containing a wonderfully executed copy of my missing sword-knot. This he handed to me "de la part du Prince Schwarzenberg," whose apologies and good wishes he also conveyed. I trust that I suitably acknowledged his Excellency's graceful act, and I took my place in the diligence with restored equanimity, but with the firm resolve never again to visit a foreign army without the formal leave of the authorities at home.

I felt convinced from what I had seen in my trip, especially in France, that preparation for war was

uppermost in the mind of those who ruled the great nations of Europe. At Cherbourg, I heard for the first time the shout of *Vive l'Empereur!* Whether spontaneous or prearranged, the cherished traditions of the first Empire seemed to have found voice. I could remember in my boyhood Louis Napoleon's ridiculous attempt at Boulogne in 1840 to re-establish the prestige of a name which, under his great predecessor, had aroused the ambition of every Frenchman. Could it be possible that the long imprisonment at Ham which followed this miserable failure gave a quiet inoffensive gentleman—whom we often saw entering his lodging in King Street, St. James's—ample time to prepare that *coup d'état* which was eventually to restore the eagles? England appeared to be calm and indifferent, although the Duke of Wellington's well-known letter to Sir John Burgoyne, which had been published not long before, might have awakened our people to the perilous condition of our home defences and the want of due preparation for war.

My allusion to the quiet position occupied by the future emperor amongst us in the middle and early 'forties, recalls to my mind a certain evening when he dined with us in the guard room at St. James's, and took up for close examination a horse's hoof which had been converted into an ornamental snuff-box. The inscription on the lid and along the gold rim with which it was shod, explained that it was the hoof of "Marengo," the favourite charger of the Emperor Napoleon. A pause in the conversation ensued as we watched the countenance of the apparently hopeless exile; the expression it bore as he laid down this relic of the past greatness of his

uncle seemed to indicate, even then, a firm belief in the destiny that awaited him.

I spoke of having started on my trip to Italy from Chichester, where the strictness of the London duties might be exchanged for comparative relaxation. It was soon to be discontinued as an annual station for a Guards battalion. It was certainly an ideal quarter, though the hut barracks, which were constructed for temporary use as far back as 1803, were still considered fit for occupation. A large, grass barrack-yard afforded space for early field days; after which all ranks were free to breathe the pure air of the Sussex downs, and indulge in every variety of amusement. We all kept hacks or ponies, and long gallops on the turf which, in days when wire fences were unknown, stretched from Goodwood racecourse right away to Arundel, enabled us to enjoy some of the finest scenery in the south of England. The Duke of Richmond showed us much kindness, placing the tennis court at Goodwood entirely at our disposal, and in September invitations for partridge-shooting were frequent. Lord Frederick Fitz Clarence was Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth, and rooms were always ready at Government House for any of us who liked to profit by his lavish hospitality. Yachting, picnics, and moonlight excursions in the Governor's barge varied our amusement.

I received much kindness also from Sir Horace Seymour, one of the most dignified members of that old school, to whom all seemed to render unqualified deference. I remember one night particularly, when we dined at his house close to Goodwood, the quartette being made up by his two sons, Charles and Beauchamp, the former

a young captain in the Scots Fusilier Guards, and the other a lieutenant in the Navy. Charles closed what would have been a brilliant career at Inkerman, sharing the fate of his impetuous chief, Sir George Cathcart, on whose staff he was serving. Beauchamp (already adopting the somewhat dandified ways which earned for him among his friends the title of "the Swell of the Ocean") little dreamt then, while his father was telling us stories of the Regency, of the honours that awaited him in later years as Admiral directing the bombardment of Alexandria, whereby he earned a peerage as Lord Alcester.

A kindly welcome at tea-time often awaited me at Slindon, a charming old house not far distant, from Lady Newburgh,* the last English survivor of an old Roman Catholic family. At her death the title devolved on the Marchese Bandini, whom I met frequently years afterwards in Rome.

Our only other country quarters were naturally Windsor, where our ill-constructed old barrack has recently been replaced by a very different edifice, which provides many comforts and resources to the soldier of the present day. Windsor in those days still afforded many attractions to the lover of country life. London, though so easily accessible, seemed to be forgotten. All the old Etonians amongst us returned to the Thames as to an old friend. The mess-dinner was not voted a bore, on the contrary, some of the pleasantest people I can think of were glad to accept hospitality from us.

During the Ascot week a couple of drags sufficed to convey our party to the course, where we ate our luncheon

* Died in 1861, aged ninety-nine.

on the roof—the Royal enclosure not having then been brought into existence, except a small space in front of the Royal stand. The luxury of a luncheon tent, and the lavish expenditure incurred thereby, had not been even dreamt of. We hunted with the Royal Buckhounds, and many a talk have I had with the veteran huntsman Charles Davis, who earned his renown in the reign of George IV. I occasionally was present at the meet of Prince Albert's harriers. His Royal Highness, though apparently enjoying the sport, on more than one occasion called me to his side, desiring information about the regiment, and becoming so engrossed in his conversation as to neglect his duties as Master. I remember particularly one day, when we were drawing the large fields lying between Bray Lock and Huntercombe, a fairly wide brook winding between the broad enclosure, while I was riding alongside the Prince, the hounds put up a hare on the further side, and the small field that was out made for a bridge about a hundred yards in front, His Royal Highness saying, "I will not keep you from your hunt," followed at an easy canter. I happened to be mounted on a horse not afraid of water, and, with pardonable swagger, turned him at the brook. The bank gave way as he took off, and we rolled together ignominiously in the flood! Some time elapsed before I again ventured to show my face at a meet of His Royal Highness's harriers.

The Great Exhibition of 1851 in Hyde Park was not undertaken without the exercise of precaution against crowded assemblies and consequent disturbances, and notwithstanding his advanced age the Duke of Wellington took measures for the preservation of order involving the

employment of troops. I was fortunate enough to be sent up from Windsor as acting adjutant of a detachment of my regiment, and we were quartered with the Life Guards, then stationed in Hyde Park barracks. The entrance to the glass palace was just in front of the barracks, and we were held in readiness on the opening day to assist in the control of the huge crowds which were expected to witness the arrival of the Queen for the inauguration of this wonderful offering to Peace and Goodwill. No pains were spared to render the ceremony worthy of the occasion. The huge crowds of spectators, both outside and inside the building, showed by their demeanour a full sense of their desire to maintain order and support Prince Albert in his great undertaking, which had not escaped criticism alike within and without the House of Commons. Old Colonel Sibthorp had warned the House "to look out for their wives and daughters," and prayed that a "hail storm or flash of lightning might descend to defeat the ill-advised project in Hyde Park." But nothing untoward happened, and those who remember the daily thronging of orderly visitors to Paxton's novel and graceful effort in architectural design will share my belief that the Great Exhibition of 1851 was one of the most notable events in Queen Victoria's reign. It has been said that the crowd, estimated at half a million in number, which assembled on the opening day did not evince any enthusiasm on the arrival of the Queen. I can affirm with confidence that the cheering was hearty and spontaneous, both without and within the building.

It was about this time that I witnessed and shared in a display of chivalrous affection towards the Queen which

I can never forget. A crazy fellow named Pate, who had often been noticed walking down Piccadilly in an offensive, swaggering manner, struck a violent blow with his cane on the Queen's forehead as her Majesty was driving out of the courtyard of Cambridge House (now the Naval and Military Club), then the town house of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. The man was, of course, arrested, and the news of his brutal assault became generally known early in the evening. I happened to be at the Opera that night. Half-way through the performance the music ceased; the curtain fell, and rose as soon as the chorus could be assembled, and "God save the Queen" resounded through the house. In the front of the royal box, alone, her attendants remaining in the background, stood her Majesty, the red mark of the ruffian's blow visible on her forehead. I shall never forget the intensity of feeling which the cheers of all present aroused. There is a depth of chivalrous regard for the person, as well as the august personality, of the Sovereign which an incident like this illustrates with a force which our national reserve is often believed to be incapable of exhibiting.

Before the close of the Exhibition in October upwards of £500,000 had been received for admission, and the far-reaching results, anticipated by the Prince and his supporters in the great enterprise, had already favourably affected our trade relations with the Continent. Ere the year 1851 drew to an end we were startled by the *coup d'état* in France, and a period of unrest ensued; though the full designs of the Prince President were not as yet apparent.

A feeling that all was not right with our army began

to find expression about this time, and the comforting assurance which invariably followed any proposal of reform in its administration—that “no man could be so foolish as to think we should ever again see active service”—was ceasing to be the conviction of thoughtful people.

I had already enjoyed five years of the life of a Guardsman, trained in the school which still looked with veneration on the principles and practice which had been crowned by the victory of Waterloo. Whether a new era was opening for strategy and tactics, whether the construction of railways and transport by steam at sea might not revolutionize the system under which armies could concentrate with a rapidity unknown to our forefathers, did not seem worthy of consideration.

In 1819, soon after the return of the army of occupation, the discharge of 33,000 men had been ordered and effected, and in a memorandum to Lord Bathurst in 1823 the Duke of Wellington deplored the policy of this reduction. In 1830 a small addition of 7,000 men was granted; but in 1851 our fighting force was practically incapable of undertaking any service outside Great Britain, beyond the maintenance of the Indian reliefs and Colonial garrisons. A sense of uneasiness prevailed, and I ardently desired an opportunity for acquiring greater professional knowledge. It is needless, therefore, for me to say with what alacrity I accepted in December, 1851, the appointment of adjutant of the 3rd battalion of my regiment. From that hour I date the beginning of my real soldiering life. Under the system then prevailing the whole work of a battalion, both as regards drill and its internal economy, fell practically

into the hands of the adjutant. He lived in barracks, never seemed to desire or really require any leave, thoroughly enjoyed his responsibility, and became the mainspring of the whole establishment. The commanding officer paid his daily visit, and during his stay in the orderly-room or on parade received the fullest measure of respect; but the long periods of leave to which custom had entitled, not only him, but the captains of companies, necessarily caused him to rely on correspondence for acquaintance with the details of regimental administration on which the efficiency of a battalion entirely depended. I do not attempt to justify this delegation to a subordinate officer of authority and influence which the regulations of the army, as well as common sense, would confine to the responsible commanding officer; but beneath this anomalous mode of attaining the desired end, there lay an unwritten law whereby the due relation between all ranks of officers was raised far above any closely-defined code. Our commanding officers were men of the world, fully conversant with social and political life; if they preferred life in a wider community to the somewhat narrow sphere of regimental command, they took the most high-minded view of the work of their subordinates, held themselves absolutely responsible for any error of judgment which they might betray, and were generous in their appreciation of duties well-performed. In like manner, the captains of companies, who, in the Brigade of Guards, then enjoyed the rank of lieutenant-colonel, paid loyal tribute to the exertions of the adjutant, when on return from long leave they recognized in the efficient and brilliant condition of their companies the care and attention he had bestowed

upon them. I repeat that so great a breach of the rules, intended to establish discipline and efficiency, could not be justified by any argument save that of a successful result. For me, it is enough to say that, following as near as I could my brother-adjutants of the Brigade, I accepted my position with pride, not unmingled with the hope of future distinction.

It may be surprising that the great Duke whom we regarded as our oracle, not only as Commander-in-Chief, but as colonel of the regiment, should have made no practical advance in preparing the army, and especially the Guards, to meet the danger of war. No improvement in our weapons, no increase of artillery, no accumulation of stores, was even hinted at; yet the clouds were gathering in the political horizon, especially in France. Still, such was our faith in the judgment and foresight of our great leader, that not even enquiry seemed to be justifiable. His last speech in Parliament was on the new Militia Bill, and within a few weeks he was no more.

I have spoken already of my commanding officer, Colonel J. Julius Angerstein, and recall with amusement some of the eccentricities which marked his kind and chivalrous bearing towards me, but which certainly did not render my position an easy one. Heedless, if not ignorant, of all the details of drill, he directed our movements at a field-day with a kind of running commentary, and as he was invariably mounted on one of the half-broken descendants of the great Napoleon's celebrated charger "Marengo," it needed all the steadiness of the battalion to obey his orders. Talking of "Marengo," after Waterloo, on which day it carried the great Emperor,

the horse was brought to England, and for some time exhibited. Eventually it was bought by Colonel Angerstein, who hoped to rear a valuable breed of racehorses from this very indifferent sire. I say indifferent, for “Marengo” was only a barb, small, not particularly well-shaped, and of a doubtful temper. His new owner was devoted to racing, and had at one time a stud at Newmarket where the progeny of “Marengo” were raised and duly trained, though colt after colt by “Marengo” out of an English dam, proved an utter failure. My chief used to bring three or four of these to Windsor, and being a perfect horseman, indulged frequently in the double task of giving instruction to his charger and his battalion at one and the same moment. He presented me with one of these historic animals, which I really tried in vain to bring into proper subjection. On one occasion, our conversation turning upon Newmarket, I confessed that I had never been there. “God bless me, never been at Newmarket! you will be good enough to come and stay with me at Weeting (his home in Norfolk) for the July meeting.” Of course I accepted, and was most royally entertained at this fine old house. On the walls of many of the rooms hung the great works of Sir Joshua, Romney, and others, since dispersed. On the following morning the old post chariot, a vehicle now quite out of date, bore us twenty miles to Newmarket as fast as four horses could travel. Here two of these lively descendants of “Marengo” awaited us, and our evolutions on the way to the course aroused much merriment. I saw the race for the July stakes, and also the feeble effort of one of the family of the barb to win a minor event.

On one occasion his soldier bātman who assisted the colonel's groom was brought to the orderly room on the charge of being found drunk while on stable duty, the horses consequently not having been fed for some hours. I remember Angerstein addressing the delinquent in the following language: "You, sir, perhaps do not understand the consequences of your neglect; your organs of digestion, sir, are convoluted, and the nourishing effect of food can consequently be prolonged for some hours; those of a horse are straight, and the poor animal requires regular feeding. Owing to your drunkenness my horses were left for hours without their proper feed."

Old-fashioned in his dress and absolutely indifferent to the fit of his uniform, though he had a tall and not ungraceful figure, Angerstein represented the type of Don Quixote rather than that of a Norfolk squire or colonel of the Guards. Generous and chivalrous to a degree, he did not exercise much influence amongst us, though it was impossible to withhold from him a strong personal liking.

I cannot claim to have been honoured by the personal notice of the great Duke of Wellington beyond a friendly bow, when we met in general society, which up till the last he delighted to frequent. Still, I like to recall those occasions which enabled me to take stock, so to speak, of *le vainqueur des vainqueurs*. One of these occasions was at a ball in Hamilton Place, not far from Apsley House. The old Duke stayed very late, as was often his wont (notwithstanding that he always rose at 6 a.m.). He was chatting with two young ladies named Hatton, whose brother was in my regiment. Their grandmother, Lady Cecilia Latouche, had been an old flame of his during his

young days in Ireland. Through some mistake, the ladies' carriage was not forthcoming to take them home. It was nearly broad daylight when the Duke bade them walk round to Apsley House, where his own carriage should be got ready for them. I had been dancing with one of the damsels; two or three others of their partners joined me, and we formed a kind of escort to the Duke, the young ladies and their mother—a quaint procession in the small hours. The stables then adjoined Apsley House; but the coachman on being roused, explained that it would take some time to get ready a carriage, so it ended by the three ladies being sent home in a hackney cab.

The Duke of Wellington has been esteemed a hard man, and no doubt there was a good deal of flint in his nature; but it was one of his characteristics to take infinite trouble in doing small and courteous acts of kindness.

One other meeting with him comes to mind. Very shortly before his death I was present at an official interview at the Horse Guards, when his Grace gave his decision on a subject closely affecting the position of a young ensign, of whose conduct his commanding officer had taken such grave notice, that he had called upon him to retire from the regiment. On his refusal to do so, his alleged offence became the subject of a Court of Enquiry, whereof the finding implied that a reprimand would suffice to mark the offence. Unfortunately Colonel —, though a high-minded gentleman, was unsympathetic, obstinate, and would not yield. Eventually the case was submitted to the Duke of Wellington as colonel-in-chief of the

regiment, and after a few days those mostly concerned in the case were summoned to his room at the Horse Guards. The party consisted of General—afterwards Sir George—Brown, adjutant-general of the Forces, the young officer and his commanding officer, while I accompanied my own commanding officer, Colonel Julius Angerstein. The Duke received us standing at his window looking out on the Horse Guards Parade, and I shall not easily forget his appearance. He had evidently been at a wedding, for a favour was attached to the lapel of his blue coat, and the edge of the Garter ribbon peeped from the border of his buff waistcoat, relieving the broad, white neck-cloth which he always wore. The adjutant-general briefly recapitulated facts of which his Grace had already been made aware, and awaited his decision. The Duke said that, although the circumstances were discreditable, he did not consider that the harsh treatment proposed by the lieutenant-colonel was called for; the youth and inexperience of the accused affording good reason for doubt as to any dishonourable intention on his part; the Duke therefore desired that the incident might be considered closed. We gave a sigh of relief (at least I know I did) when the unfortunate youngster expressed his hope that he might return to his duty with no stain upon his honour. "Certainly," said the Duke, "no stain, no stain"—and he turned to the window. Colonel —— sprang forward and in a loud voice exclaimed, "I would have your Grace to understand that my opinion about this officer is registered before God, and that no man upon earth can make me alter it!" The Duke affected complete deafness, upon which Colonel —— came closer and repeated the

words in stentorian tones. My poor chief, clasping his hands, whispered to me, “This is too dreadful!” General Brown, one of the rough, old Peninsular school, seized Colonel ——’s coat-tails, exclaiming, “Don’t be a d——d fool,” and endeavoured to drag him from the room. Turning round, Colonel —— desired him to mind his own business, and an altercation ensued. The Duke retired to his window, apparently unconscious of the disturbance. The rest of us closed round the adjutant-general and Colonel ——, who kept up their altercation as far as the door and even down the staircase.

Proceeding to the regimental orderly-room, which was then at the Horse Guards, Colonel —— issued an order summoning every officer of the regiment in London to meet him the following morning at St. George’s Barracks where my battalion was stationed. When we were assembled, he walked up the middle of the room in silence, greeting no one; then turning, said in a grave tone, “I have been ordered by his Grace, the colonel of the regiment, to restore Mr. —— to the position as an officer which he held before the recent Court of Enquiry. I decline to do so, and I resign command of the regiment.” Resuming his hat, he strode out of the room, and I never saw him again.

I recall all this with special interest as I do not remember ever having seen the Duke afterwards. Within a very few weeks there lay upon a camp bed, in the dimly-lighted chamber at Walmer Castle, the “hero of a hundred fights,” whose spirit had returned to Him who gave it.

In November I attended the Duke's funeral, having been sent up from Windsor in charge of the flank companies from my battalion, to form a Guard of Honour at the western door of St. Paul's Cathedral. Parading at a very early hour, we marched along the Strand and Fleet Street to St. Paul's some time in advance of the great procession, and I had ample opportunity to observe the evidence of national grief in the grave attitude of the crowd in the streets.

We were formed up across the entire western entrance. As the head of the procession appeared at the top of Ludgate Hill, the pall-bearers, each of whom bore an historic name and had come as a representative of the great nations on the continent with whom we were in alliance, joined with the small knot of survivors of the Duke's old companions in arms, and took their place on the platform erected above the upper flight of steps and stood with bared heads as the funeral car drew up. Then occurred an incident which very nearly marred the imposing effect of the ceremony. The huge funeral car (the frame of which can still be seen in the crypt of St. Paul's) was covered with draperies which concealed even the wheels. The twelve horses which drew it had, I believe, been placed at the disposal of the authorities by a well-known firm of brewers as being better adapted to draw this enormous weight than artillery teams, however well-trained. They were all covered with trappings of black velvet and nodding plumes, and their own attendants, suitably dressed, prevented the occurrence of any serious accident. But the ascent of the paved roadway, leading in a curve to the entrance of the Cathedral, had been

especially covered with sand and proved too much for the horses. On arriving at the point where it was intended that the coffin should be transferred from the catafalque to the little tramway laid from the steps right along the nave to the centre of the dome, the car halted too soon, a few feet short of the point where the transfer could alone be made. In vain the horses strained to move the car deeply imbedded in the sand, and the pause which followed left the distinguished veterans who stood bare-headed on the platform, exposed to the cold November wind. I overheard Prince Gortschakoff say, "Ce froid est insupportable." Suddenly from under the drapery of the car, some half-dozen figures emerged clad in the roughest possible clothes, each carrying a crowbar or other implement. They had walked the whole way under the car, concealed from view, evidently intended to be emergency men, and their grim appearance would have attracted more notice had they not at once proceeded to lever the wheels to the required spot. All this involved considerable delay, during which some onlookers managed to slip into the Cathedral unobserved, behind the flanks of our Guard of Honour, which was standing rigidly at the "present." The Dean and his two vergers tried in vain to stop them, so I made my way through the ranks till I reached a spot where dear old Dean Milman* was vainly gesticulating against the crowd. He received my offer of assistance with much relief and gave me full power to stop further intrusion. To place two files of stalwart Grenadiers at each door with orders to allow no one to pass, soon sufficed to restore a sufficient space for the final procession along the nave.

* Dean Milman, as a lad, had witnessed the burial of Nelson.

As I considered the Dean owed me a small debt of gratitude, I did not scruple to avail myself of the opportunity of joining the train of mourners that stood under the dome, while the coffin was lowered through the opening prepared for it to its final resting-place in the crypt. So much has been written and said about the impressiveness of the scene that I can add nothing to the varied descriptions of the ceremony; but although sixty-two years have elapsed since then, I can never think without emotion of the moment when the plume of the well-known hat, fluttering in the draught that rose from the vault beneath, sank beneath the pavement, while the organ pealed out the last chord of the Dead March in *Saul*.

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CHAPTER IV

FROM PEACE TO WAR

1852-1854

I TURN to another subject, more interesting, perhaps, historically, to the Brigade of Guards ; but showing how from small beginnings great results, not originally in view, may follow. It was, I think, in 1852, that I had a conversation with Henry Daniell and Dudley Carleton,* about the shockingly inadequate provision for married soldiers in barracks. All applications to the War Office having been met with the usual reply, "No funds available," we conceived the idea that a small company of shareholders might be formed and a suitable building erected, wherein, at the lowest possible rents, the families of non-commissioned officers and men married "with leave" might find a decent residence. As the project seemed rather wild, we agreed to meet the following week and meanwhile to sound any probable sympathisers in the scheme.

I appealed to my commanding officer, Colonel Angerstein, who immediately agreed to invest £500. Dudley Carleton approached Miss Burdett Coutts, who promptly offered £1500 ; Colonel Henry Daniell and his old brother officer, Colonel Ely Wigram, produced another £500 between them. At our appointed meeting, therefore, we

* Succeeded in 1875 as fourth and last Baron Dorchester. Died in 1897.

had £2500 already promised. The augury was so favourable that we determined to proceed, and in a few weeks we had more than £9000 to deal with.

Acting under legal advice, we issued this amount in debentures for small amounts, bearing interest at $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. An experienced architect, Mr. Henry Darbishire, provided plans, and in a very few months the building, subsequently known as the Victoria Lodging House, was erected on a freehold site purchased in Francis Street, Vauxhall Bridge Road, and was ready for occupation. It provided tenements of two rooms, and a kitchen for each of fifty-four families. So far so good. Each tenement was soon filled at a rental of 2s. 6d. a week, and the debenture holders had every prospect of receiving their $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest; but trouble was in store for us. A debenture holder died, leaving property in which his debentures were included, to be divided. The real value of our debentures was pronounced to be far higher than was shown by the interest with which the original holders had agreed to be content, the rents of our tenements being ridiculously low. Our lawyers informed us that we should always be liable to our debentures falling into the hands of people indifferent to the object the founders had in view; and that, moreover, it might be doubtful whether we were not infringing the rule which forbade an officer, while serving, to engage in any financial transactions which might bring him into the position of landlord towards those under his command. Our dilemma was solved by the War Office taking over the building, paying us 80 per cent. for our investment, and establishing—for the first time—a married people's quarter in the

garrison of London. A sum of about £8000 became available thereby, inasmuch as the debenture holders in a body generously declined to have their money returned, leaving it for the benefit of the Brigade. The original committee, strengthened by the introduction of new members, decided to establish an Institute or Club, where, in addition to the library, reading and billiard rooms, and carpenter's shop, refreshments, including beer (under certain restrictions), might afford a place of resort likely to raise the position of the private soldier. A club house was built, also in Francis Street, and duly inaugurated; but it must be admitted that it was a failure, and its dissolution became inevitable. The building and its valuable site was sold, and, having been subjected to alteration, is now the residence of the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster.

Again the Committee had a considerable sum amounting to about £7000 to deal with, and much thought was devoted as to its ultimate destination. Much influenced, I believe, by the earnest advocacy of Colonel Philip Smith of the Grenadier Guards, we decided to devote this money to converting the existing chapel in Wellington barracks into a place of worship more worthy of its sacred purpose than the building, which though sternly classic outwardly, in its interior arrangements could in no way inspire feelings of reverence. We approached the War Office authorities, who declined to allow us to alter or remove the outside walls, but permitted us to deal as we liked with the interior. A careful examination of the building disclosed that the outer walls were of sufficient strength to admit of the interior being removed. Mr. Street, R.A.,

was consulted, and submitted plans for the beautiful chapel in which to-day we all take so much pride.* The Lombardo-Byzantine form which admitted of arcades and the use of the richest marbles and mosaics was adopted, and has since been faithfully carried out by Mr. Pearson, to whom the work was entrusted on the death of Mr. Street. I refrain from dwelling on the subsequent development of the scheme, although, from the beginning down to the present moment, my personal interest in the chapel has never diminished. Its full history is related in the published volume, copies of which can always be obtained. It is enough for me to record that, as a Valhalla, the chapel bears on its walls and in its decoration memorials of those who have served in the Brigade of Guards during the last two hundred and fifty years; that over a hundred thousand pounds in private gifts have been expended on its lavish decoration, and that it is in all respects worthy of Him to whose services it is in all humility dedicated.

It will be observed, I hope with interest, how from so small a starting-point as the conversation referred to at the beginning of this chapter, three institutions arose, each of which effected important results, the last of the three remaining, I hope, for all time an evidence how from small beginnings great ends may be achieved.

It may seem incredible to my readers that, notwithstanding frequent and urgent application, the War Office refuses to permit this grand memorial chapel to be consecrated.

The appointment of Lord Hardinge to succeed the Duke of Wellington as Commander-in-Chief, enabled all

* The original of this plan hangs in the vestry.

who were concerned in our military administration to profit by the warning of his great predecessor. In 1853, it was decided to form a camp of exercise, so that our regiments, hitherto scattered throughout the kingdom, might be gathered into brigades and divisions. Entering my room at Windsor barracks one morning, Colonel Angerstein gaily informed me that he had received orders from the Horse Guards for two officers to be sent off to report upon ground not far distant from Windsor, suitable for a camp of 10,000 men.

"I have told Colonel Hamilton," said he, "that I have selected him for one expedition and you for the other."

In vain I protested that I had not received a Sandhurst education, that beyond the use of a protractor and the prismatic compass, I knew nothing of surveying.

"Never mind, you will go at once and report on the open ground lying between the village of Sunningdale and Woking."

Such were our instructions. Hamilton was to explore an apparently unknown country said to exist between Woking and Farnham, with special reference to high ground called the Fox Hills, not far distant from a small village called Aldershot. With no particular liking for the job, I had no alternative but to obey. I bought a compass, a sheet of the Ordnance map, hired a fly, took my orderly-room clerk with me, and the next day drove to a lonely spot on the main road, marked Broomhill Hut, at the north end of Chobham Common. Following a badly marked track, we proceeded on foot in the direction of the highest point of land, hoping from thence to obtain a fair general survey. We were twice over our knees

in bogs, which subsequently I found interfered with the passage of almost all the valleys between the ridges, the ground, in short, though it afforded ample space, was not inviting for the movements of cavalry and artillery. A clump of fir-trees, which still crowns the summit of the highest ridge, formed the only prominent mark in the landscape. There was no sign of water fit for drinking; wherefore, after a second visit on the following day, I reported officially that I considered the ground quite unsuitable for its intended purpose. Colonel Hamilton returned after a more prolonged inspection of the unknown territory he had been sent to survey, and recommended it as in every way advantageous.

I refer to this incident only because, for some unknown reason, the authorities decided to make the ground on which I reported unfavourably, the site for what was afterwards called the camp of Chobham. The Fox Hills and the adjacent land, whereon Hamilton had reported favourably, were destined not long after to become the centre of our great military establishment, now so well known as Aldershot.

In June, 1853, about 9000 men of all arms were concentrated at Chobham* under the command of General Lord Seaton, an officer who not only had won the highest distinction in the Peninsula and at Waterloo, but still retained much of his former vigour, and possessed both tact and a charm of manner which inspired confidence in all who served under him. †

The Queen being at Windsor, my battalion could not

* "In June, 1853, a force of between 8000 to 10,000 men went into camp at Chobham, a spectacle novel to the present generation of Englishmen."—*Annual Register*.

† Field-marshal in 1860. Died in 1863.

be spared; but it sent 100 men to the camp to form the guard of honour whenever her Majesty made her frequent visits to the scene of manœuvres. I was enabled, therefore, to serve as galloper on Lord Seaton's staff, and thus to observe closely all that went on.

It is one of the risks in making any attempt at an autobiography undertaken late in life, that the judgment formed upon a long past event such as the camp at Chobham must be strongly affected by subsequent experience; and many years have elapsed since I witnessed this gathering together of troops of all arms within the narrow limits of our island, the first since the peace of 1815. At the time I felt a natural pride in the appearance of our fighting force. The fine physique of the men of every regiment and the results of discipline everywhere apparent, probably caused us to regard with complacency the slow, rigid movements of battalions and brigades. We clung to the belief that the "shoulder to shoulder" line of British infantry would still maintain its superiority over all other formations which continental armies might adopt.

The frequent visits of the Sovereign, valuable as they were as marking the interest her Majesty took in her army, did not always conduce to that practice in manœuvres which was so highly to be desired. The inevitable march past for royal inspection, though highly interesting to spectators, sadly interfered with the important work of training, and though I learnt much—as I then thought—the rude awakening to the realities of war, which was so soon to burst upon us, brought out strongly the terrible shortcomings to which the long indifference to preparation for active service exposed us.

In simple justice to the gallant men who filled our ranks at that date, I pause for a moment to note the difference between the manœuvres of the present day and those which we performed at Chobham. In the early autumn of the year in which I write (1913) a force of 10,000 to 15,000 men was engaged in manœuvres, the central point of which was on the Chiltern Hills, not far from my own home. I had daily opportunities of observing the nature of their equipment, camp equipage and capability for undertaking any operation of war. Four battalions of Guards, leaving their bearskin caps and London uniform behind them, marched on to the ground clothed in khaki, each man fully trained to the use of the best modern rifle, and fit at any moment to undertake a march of twenty miles. All instruction had for its end the development of intelligence in the men. Although under general control, the individual soldier learned to act as much as possible for himself, though never losing touch with the comrades of the company or detachment to which he belonged. All the cooking and camp arrangements were organized on a carefully thought-out system practised at Aldershot; the recently invented "cooker" prepared the midday meal as the columns moved along the roads which, to my personal knowledge, are difficult to traverse, and require staff officers to be vigilant and cautious in following them. I need not allude to the cavalry and artillery, both of which arms have laid aside the traditions of the old six- and nine-pounder muzzle-loading guns, and with wondrous advance in scientific knowledge direct the movements of the modern weapon, while the cavalry hover in

small detachments on the front and flanks of the advancing force. I watched it all with profound admiration, not, however, unmingled with somewhat painful memories. The contrast between Chobham and the Chilterns, forced me to admit that our education had been sadly incomplete and that our rulers, lulled by the continuance of a long period of peace, and pledged by the will of our countrymen to observe the closest economy in naval and military armament, had neglected in an unpardonable degree all preparation for a sudden summons to a campaign beyond our shores.

At Chobham our three battalions of Guards marched on to the ground in red coats and bearskin caps, precisely as they mounted guard in London. The cost of any repairs to clothing or kit, not proved to have been damaged by unavoidable accident, was charged to the soldier; no addition was made to his ration, the canteen paid the government a rent for the privilege of supplying beer, and no authorized system existed whereby temperance could be encouraged. The duties of a commissariat force were scarcely understood, and the means of transport by the military train so limited, that to transfer the camp ten miles without civilian aid could not have been accomplished under two days. From highest to lowest, all ranks in the force realized the necessity for rousing the country to a knowledge of the peril which would be incurred by further neglect and indifference. Warnings which reached the Government from their representatives in every European capital must have left upon the Ministry no doubt that our capability of sustaining a campaign on the continent of Europe would soon be

severely tried. My own convictions were strengthened by the following incident.

The Russian General Ogaroff had been sent on special mission to the manœuvres. I was directed one day to attend upon him at a field day, the concluding event of which was to be the storming and capture of the summit of the ridge. During the field day the general's comments, made sometimes in French, at others in Russian, with his staff on the form of attack were far from complimentary, but when the crisis culminated and, with shouting and disordered ranks, the successful storming party reached their goal, the general and his staff greeted the accomplishment of the manœuvre with laughter too loud to conceal their sense of its absurdity. It was with difficulty that I affected not to notice this expression of ridicule so marked as to be offensive. Since then, I have often thought that General Ogaroff's report to the Emperor must have strengthened His Majesty's belief that he might treat England's threats of possible military intervention with indifference.* Before the date of the breaking up of our camp the Russian troops had crossed the Pruth and occupied the Principalities; yet the Prime Minister declared at the Lord Mayor's dinner that "the essential policy of Her Majesty's Government is a policy of peace."

Though we knew we were the first battalion for foreign service, we changed our quarters from Windsor to the Tower, resuming garrison duties without a hint of any kind that our services might soon be called for. The

* Just as Kaiser Wilhelm spoke (and thought) of our "contemptible little army."—*Ed.*

delicate negotiations for the maintenance of European concert and the preservation of peace involved a secrecy which became distasteful to the nation. Late in September the Government received some light upon public feeling from the enthusiastic cheering which greeted a speech by Lord John Russell, who declared that "If peace cannot be maintained with honour it is no longer peace." Thus the Government became aware that an appeal to arms in resisting unjust demands either upon us or our allies would be supported by public opinion. Nevertheless the New Year had come to us, and the month of January had almost passed before the note of preparation was sounded, and it was not until the 14th February that we marched amid the cheers of the East End population from the Tower to St. George's Barracks, which then occupied much of the ground on which the North rooms of the National Gallery now stand. Here, with all the disadvantages which extreme haste and want of experience inevitably produce, we proceeded to fill up our ranks with men qualified to take the field immediately.

The army being wholly without reserves, large transfers from our other two battalions were made as rapidly as the guard duties of the West End would permit, and within a week 850 non-commissioned officers and men, worthy representatives in physique and bearing of those who in bygone days had placed the regiment in the proud position it still retained, paraded for inspection by our colonel, Prince Albert. Prince Albert was attended by the Commander-in-Chief and the Duke of Cambridge, under whose command as a divisional general we were to serve. My work was incessant, increasing daily in

responsibility, as, owing to promotions and other causes, we were to receive a new commanding officer. The coveted command fell somewhat unexpectedly on Colonel Wood,* whose frank, genial personality and knowledge of the world (for he had been a Member of Parliament) caused his appointment to be received by all of us with satisfaction. But on the day he took up his duties he told me quietly that the arrangement of his property and other family business had to be so hastily accomplished as to interfere with his daily attendance in barracks for the supervision of affairs. "I leave all details to you," he said. "If you make blunders I will accept the responsibility, but you have my entire confidence."

Needless to say, I was fully occupied. But for the daily evening visit to my family, I never quitted barracks. It would not interest the general reader, or even one conversant with military organization, were I to dwell on the varied incidents which were crowded into the last week of preparation. On the 22nd February we marched to Waterloo Station *en route* for embarkation. Our brother officers and the older members of the First Guards Club entertained us at a parting banquet, at which I had the honour of responding to the toast of "The Adjutant." Then came the final leave takings, and, however long my life may extend, I shall never forget the last evening at home.

Returning to barracks that night previous to embarkation, I found that, through neglect of orders, the barrack

* Thomas, son of Colonel Wood of Littleton, his mother being Lady Caroline, daughter of first Marquess of Londonderry, half-sister of the great Castlereagh.

gates had been opened with too great indulgence. Sweethearts and wives, besides other intruders, had found their way into the barrack-room long after tattoo. Rest was impossible, and I was engaged throughout the night in establishing order. At 3 a.m. the bugle sounded, and by the dim light of lanterns the roll was called, and the companies fell in. Not a man was missing. A little before five o'clock we filed out through the narrow west door of the National Gallery opening on to Trafalgar Square, the leading files, as they descended the steps, being welcomed by a crowd which, for enthusiasm, I never saw equalled. I had sent my horse round to the foot of the steps, and had some difficulty in maintaining my position while company by company took its place in the column. Though three-score years have elapsed since that early February morning, and though I have since witnessed many scenes when the feelings of the good people of London have been roused to fever-pitch, I cannot recall such display of spontaneous enthusiasm as was offered to us as we proceeded along the Strand and over Waterloo Bridge. Figures still in their night-dresses waved handkerchiefs from the windows of houses by the way; the police with difficulty restrained the crowds which accompanied us along the pavement from breaking into the ranks to shake hands with the men as they passed along. As if sensible of this proof of good-will and trust, our Grenadiers preserved a grave silence and bearing, and we arrived at Waterloo without difficulty, took our places in the train, and started on our journey to the parting strains of "The British Grenadiers" from the regimental band—which we were not again to hear for many a long day.

But a further display of good-will awaited us at Southampton. As we formed up on the quay after leaving the train, we found H.R.H. Prince Albert, who had come over from Osborne, the Duke of Richmond, who had come from Goodwood, and many other friends and relations of our officers waiting for a final farewell. His Royal Highness said a few kind words to each and all of us, and the embarkation began. Our ship, the *Ripon*, a P. and O. paddle-steamer of about 2000 tons, was filled to its utmost capacity long before our numbers could be accommodated in the space allotted by officials, ignorant or unaware of the bulky proportions and special equipment of our men. Two companies remained standing on the quay for whom no provision apparently could be made. There lay alongside of us a small screw-steamer called the *Manilla*, which we were told was to sail the same time as ourselves, and for the same destination—Malta. As no time could be lost, for our captain desired to move at once out into the tide-way, I obtained leave from the port official to stow our two companies on board the *Manilla*, giving the senior captain the entire charge. We did not see them again for three weeks, when we arrived at Malta after a tedious passage.

I cannot forget the kindness of the old Duke of Richmond who, while saying good-bye to me, noticed my horse being taken on board very insufficiently clothed for a sea-voyage. I explained that in the haste of my departure I had forgotten all about it. He instantly sent a servant into the town, who returned with a complete suit of horse-clothing, in which my favourite and only charger was duly arrayed before we cast off from the docks. I can see now

the Duke's * kindly face. No doubt he was thinking of the day when, at his last hard-fought fight at Orthez some forty years before, as a captain in the 52nd Regiment he received the wound from the effects of which he never fully recovered.

As the captain of our ship thought it was coming on to blow, we anchored for the night in Lymington Roads, our Grenadiers rapidly succumbing to the effects of the heavy roll to which, even in our sheltered anchorage, we were exposed. The hideous experiences of that night when I inspected the lower decks may be imagined, but not described. Perhaps a verse from a song which I can still remember, and which was composed during the voyage by George Cadogan, one of our officers, will best illustrate our position—

“Southampton Docks are reached at last,
Our stout and gallant band
Have trode the deck that wafts them from
Their native British land.
One more ‘Hurrah!’ The anchor’s up,
And now our ship so brave,
As conscious of her gallant freight,
Stems high the ocean wave.
But our Gren-a-dier
Feels a—leestle—queer,
For he really had no notion
Of the ocean’s funny motion;
But ‘Hurrah!’ cries he,
‘Guardsmen bold are we,
And proud, I ween,
To serve the Queen
By land or sea.’ ”

* Charles, fifth Duke of Richmond. Died in 1860.

CHAPTER V

EASTWARD BOUND

February—April, 1854

IF it should appear to the casual reader that I devote more than due space in my story to the record of events in the Crimean War, I desire at once to disclaim any title to the rôle of historian. The pages of Kinglake relate in brilliant, if aggressive, language the causes, the progress, and the termination of that fierce struggle, whereof the results did not appear to be commensurate with the bloodshed and treasure expended during the two years and a half of hostilities. But apart from the fact that, from the date of my departure from England in 1854 till my return in 1856, I was never otherwise than "on duty," I have found, carefully preserved by my family, the complete series of letters which, almost in the form of a journal, recorded all the events in which I took part, the rash forebodings, fallacious prophecies, and audacious criticisms poured forth in letters which, written hurriedly, expressed the individual thoughts of an actor in the scene. Perusing them now with the eye of one who is able in his later life to take an indulgent view of the unstudied outpourings of an enthusiastic youngster, I recognize to the full how sound is the opinion of Disraeli when he said that he preferred the biographer to the historian when facts and truth were to be considered. Certainly this applies to

military history. Notwithstanding the attractive form adopted by Napier in his narrative of the Peninsular War, his brilliancy of description and command of soul-stirring language, the student would infinitely prefer Wellington's despatches as a fountain of accurate information, and the journals of young officers and even private soldiers supply details both of great operations and minor events which could not possibly come under the cognizance of the Commander-in-Chief or generals of division. Quite recently I obtained direct evidence of this. While in the south of France I searched some of the French official records of Wellington's advance against Marshal Soult in the campaign of 1813-14. I found, constantly quoted by the French staff, the journals of English cavalry and infantry officers, and even of private soldiers, the imperfect translation sometimes causing a smile. I therefore offer no apology to my kindly readers for dealing at some length with these stirring events of my life, as I cherish strong hope that the present generation of young soldiers may find instruction, as well as interest, in the daily journals of one whose aspirations in those days were as keen as their own.

For the war itself there was no immediate or direct cause. For a long while the statesmen of Europe had been endeavouring to allay the smouldering influences of the revolution of '48, and when the differences between Russia and Turkey over the custody of the Holy Places proved to have their source in the far wider project of the Emperor Nicholas, to annihilate the power, if not to usurp the territory, of the Sultan in Europe, it became evident that war was imminent. For the complete though rapid

comprehension of the whole position previous to the commencement of hostilities, the reader need seek no further information than is afforded by the autograph letters exchanged between the Emperor Napoleon and the Emperor Nicholas in March, 1854, and the diplomatic circular framed on those letters by the French foreign minister, M. Drouyn de Lhuys. In these may be recognized to the full the high policy and well-considered efforts to preserve peace which held back, but so dangerously prolonged, the negotiations, whereof the object was to avoid plunging the Powers of Europe into the horrors of war. These negotiations involved delay, coupled with secrecy, whereby the impending danger was withheld from the English people; and to this must be attributed the utter unreadiness of the British Government for a campaign on an extended scale. Had the note of preparation been sounded in the autumn of 1853, the stores necessary for the despatch of an army on foreign service could have been provided; but no doubt such evidence of our readiness to take the field might, from the diplomatic point of view, have seriously weakened our protestations in favour of peace. It will be therefore readily understood how the army suffered, not through culpable ignorance of Ministers but in consequence of their determination not to deviate from the peaceful attitude which they had adopted.

The Massacre of Sinope proved the match which fired the indignation of the English people, and the Ministry saw at once that the country was with them, should action be required. An immediate treaty with France guaranteed a provision of 80,000 English soldiers to fight in alliance with an army of 70,000 Frenchmen for the integrity of the

Ottoman Empire against the demands of the Emperor of Russia.

But where was our *matériel* for this expedition? The utmost activity in the arsenals barely sufficed to provide guns. The recently-adopted Minié rifle could not be supplied in sufficient quantity to equip the infantry with the most important arm available for modern warfare. Clothing, shoes, general equipment—all had to be ordered in desperate haste; consequently regiment after regiment was hurried abroad ill-prepared for immediate service, and, from the outset, distrustful of the authorities at home to whom they were entitled to look for support and due provision. Hesitation as to our destination still appeared to linger in the counsels of the Ministry. I remember remonstrating on being informed that a “slop” shirt, to be worn over the uniform on board ship, was the only article of extra clothing granted to the men of my battalion on embarking. I received the half-whispered reply, “My dear fellow, you will probably not go beyond Malta!” In short, the gravity of the situation had not been realized by those in authority, and in these, the first stages of the campaign, the army suffered accordingly.

But another unforeseen source of difficulty seriously affected the harmonious action of the two armies of the Allies. No *entente*, however cordial on the surface, could remove altogether the belief that French and English soldiers looked upon each other rather as foes than as friends. Traditions of the Peninsula and Waterloo had not died out; the colours of every regiment in the British force recalled the battles and campaigns fought against those we then considered our hereditary enemies. It would

be idle to pretend that our simple-minded rank-and-file regarded the under-sized red-legged, quick-witted *fantassins* as comrades with whom they were destined to share the dangers and the glories of the battlefield. Far be it from me to suggest that the *entente* was not preserved by the upper ranks on both sides with absolute loyalty; though from time to time accident or inadvertence did reveal traces of the old rivalry which had not yet been laid to rest. When on my way home in 1856, I dined with the British Ambassador in Paris, Lord Cowley, who told me of an incident he had witnessed in 1854 at the great conference in Paris between the French Minister of War and the marshals, Lord Raglan, the Duke of Cambridge, and their respective staffs. Lord Raglan pointed to the map illustrating the respective positions likely to be occupied by the Allies, and twice indicated with his finger certain places which might be occupied by *l'ennemi*, evidently forgetting for the moment that for *l'ennemi* should have been substituted *nos amis* or *nos alliés*. Our revered commander-in-chief was evidently back for the moment in the days when he rode side by side with the Duke of Wellington at Waterloo and lost an arm. Nor as subsequent events were to show was the old spirit of antagonism quite extinct, even when, after the fall of Sebastopol, the armies which had been combined for upwards of two years bade each other farewell; for it will be remembered that before eighteen months had elapsed, regiment after regiment of the French army clamoured for authority to capture in the heart of England the associates of Orsini, whose attempt on the life of the Emperor had roused the indignation of the civilized world.

Had the general plan of campaign permitted the two armies to operate from bases widely separated, frequent sources of friction might have been avoided; but the close proximity of the French and ourselves, in camp as well as in the trenches and the battlefield, gave us the impression throughout the war that we were intended to be auxiliaries, rather than comrades on equal terms.

I am unable to judge whether our Ministers at home and diplomatists abroad believed it to be of no importance that we should yield the claims and privileges of equals in the field when the allied force was formed; but strong evidence will be found in the following pages that, however good friends we might be—and we *were* good friends—the French would never concede to us the slightest claim to the supremacy on land which they acknowledged we possessed at sea. We foresaw that Lord Raglan’s position would be one needing the exercise of constant tact, firmness, and consideration, which indeed were the qualities for which he was specially distinguished.

Let me now resume the thread of my story at the outset of our voyage to the Mediterranean.

We had waved adieu to our friends on the quay, and the captain was just about to give the order to cast off, when a telegraph boy appeared and exclaimed, “Any gentleman of the name of Russell on board?” I turned to the captain and said, “We have Sir Charles Russell,* one of our officers with us, but I know of no one else.”

* One of the first to receive the Victoria Cross for gallantry at Inkerman. M.P. for Berks., 1865–68, and for Westminster, 1874–82. Died in 1883.

"Oh," he said, "then it must be the man who came on board just before you with an Admiralty order for a passage to Malta; I will send down to him."

Up came immediately a little man who, after looking at the telegram, said to me in a cheery Irish brogue—

"Oh, I expected this, and have my bag ready packed. I shall see you all again at Malta. I am reporting for the *Times*."

It was not till I saw him again that I ascertained from "Billy" Russell the exact reason for his hasty disappearance from the deck of the *Ripon* just as we were starting. If I remember rightly, it would appear that the *Times* had obtained leave from the Government to send a correspondent with the expedition, and that he was to receive a free passage, necessarily at Government expense. Other newspapers got wind of this—the first instance of the power of the press receiving official recognition. A question was to be asked in the House of Commons on the afternoon of the day of our departure, whether, if this unprecedented privilege had been granted to the *Times*, other newspapers might not claim equal consideration. Apparently the Government thought their action with regard to the *Times* had been hasty and premature, and if Mr. Russell were recalled immediately by telegraph, a reply could be given at question time later in the day that "no such authority had been granted." But the power of the "fourth Estate" was soon to be more fully recognized, and the claims of other newspapers for facilities both in transport and in camp were subsequently granted without difficulty.

The career of Sir William Russell—as he afterwards

became—is so well known that I need not refer to it at greater length except in so far as his influence as a correspondent affected public opinion. Looked upon by all of us, at first, as a cheery companion, he was for a long time welcomed in every camp; but later on, when the stories of the sufferings of the troops, the weariful monotony of the siege, and the want of due provision for the campaign in the Crimea appeared in the *Times* from his pen, it was felt there existed in our midst a new force which might influence the judgment, not only of the Government, but of all our friends at home, both on the reputation of our leaders and the conduct of the war. Lord Raglan, our revered chief, had frankly allowed Mr. Russell to pitch his tent at headquarters, and had given him access to all such information as he believed to be suitable for publication, treating him with equal courtesy and confidence. When after long delays in the post, the *Times* at last reached us, and we read in its columns Russell's ungenerous reflections on Lord Raglan's fitness for the difficult and delicate post he occupied, imputing incompetence to a commander sorely harassed by the difficulties of co-operating with an ally of uncertain susceptibility, our indignation and distrust were aroused. From that time forward he was coldly received in our camp, and it was a long time before we arrived at the conviction that "Billy" Russell was but fulfilling a duty confided to him by employers, who conceived that the standing and opulence of their journal justified utter indifference to the reputations of those entrusted with the administration of the campaign, and the command of the forces in the field. I knew him well in his latter days, and often

discussed with him the change in our relations which time had accomplished.

For our experience on the voyage to the prospective seat of war I shall now have recourse to extracts from letters which I wrote home at the time—

S.S. *Ripon*.

Sunday, 26th February [1854]: in sight of Burlings Rocks, 40 miles from Lisbon.—I must make my ship letter a sort of journal and fill it in each day until I can find an opportunity of sending it. I am sitting on the quarter-deck, my paper resting on the cabin skylight. The men in their white frocks grouped forward discussing their dinner, the sea calm as a mill pond, and the sun so gloriously powerful that one almost regrets there not being a cloud in the sky to give an occasional shadow to the glare. . . .

We anchored the night of Wednesday in Cowes Roads, and started at daylight; everybody sea-sick at first, and in a desperate state of confusion all Thursday, not above half the officers, and scarcely any of the N.C.O.'s or men, being available. I stood out manfully for some time, but as the necessity of exertion decreased so t'other sensations got the upper hand, and by four o'clock I was in my cabin in a very uncomfortable condition. The next day matters looked worse, if possible, for we were well into the Bay of Biscay, and although the weather was delightful, the long roll of the Atlantic would keep reminding us that we were not in a penny steamer going from London to Hungerford Bridge. However, we shook right at last. . . . We are on the whole well put up, as far as officers are concerned; but the men are shamefully crowded. Like all that is done by Government agents, the preparations were neglected, and nothing short of the good humour and excitement of the men could have carried them through. We

are capitally fed, I must say, and the quantity we eat now is terrific. It would do my dear mother's heart good to see me at breakfast, again at luncheon, again at dinner, again at tea, and lastly winding up with grog at 9 p.m. The captain is a good old soul, a great stickler for respect, but with a proper idea of Her Majesty's Guards, who make him do pretty much as they like. The ship is a very good one, and we are at least 80 miles ahead of the *Orinoco*, whose smoke we can just descry astern. As for the *Manilla*, we have not seen her since we started. . . .

To-day we had divine service on the quarter-deck, a most impressive and picturesque scene. Think of me as officiating clergyman. I never thought I should have to read the Church Service to a congregation of 800 souls. All my traps are useful, and I do not think I could have done better in the way of equipment. The little mare is wonderfully well, and begins to eat again like a Christian.

What a scene it was leaving London; I never to my dying day shall forget it! The darkness, the crowds upon crowds of people, the music which the mob would sing to, and the cheering, combined to render the night of the 21st one of the most extraordinary I ever passed. No doubt the papers gave a description of the scene, if not, some of your friends must have done so. Nor were the Southampton people less enthusiastic, the crowds of friends that we found already on board the *Ripon* sadly impeded our finding our places, but one had not the heart to bid them go away.

27th.—I left off yesterday afternoon in order to look at *such* a sunset! It is certainly worth all the trouble of going to sea to have the opportunity of seeing the sun set out of sight of land. We passed Cape St. Vincent at 8.30 this morning within 5 or 6 miles. The coast is particularly ugly and iron-bound. We expect to reach Gibraltar at 8 o'clock to-morrow (Tuesday) morning, and I fear it is

now decided that we stop to coal there: a very dirty job. The wind, which is now blowing fresh, is unluckily from the S.E., and our sails are consequently useless to us; this accounts for the old skipper having resolved to run no risks of being short of fuel. . . . The men are practising at a target hung from the foretop gallant studding-sail boom with the Minié rifle. Cadogan has painted a canvas "Rooshan," which we shall hang up when the sea is a little less rough, and that will be a more popular target than the painted board they are now firing at . . . 8 o'clock p.m. Our men are in the highest spirits, and even officers are like so many children. Since dinner, which you know is at 4 o'clock at sea, we have been dancing reels, singing glees, playing at cockfighting on the deck, and "tournament," a schoolboy game in which two knights, each mounted on the back of a heavy friend, charge each other. I, on the back of Prince Edward [of Saxe-Weimar], gained a signal victory over Balgonie,* mounted on Colonel Cox. The whole concluded as twilight closed into darkness with a general chorus of "God save the Queen," in which the battalion joined, the last verse being echoed with three cheers. In fact, everybody seems so alive to the novelty and excitement of our present life in comparison to that which we have been leading so very lately, that nothing seems absurd, nothing *too* wild or out of the common way to be adopted at once.

I need not talk about the health of our party: we have none on the sick list, even *sea-sick* list; whether this will last should the wind rise again remains to be proved. As for Anstruther,† he is so noisy that there is no holding him, and Kinloch ‡ has quite recovered his spirits, at least as

* Viscount Balgonie, eldest son of eleventh Earl of Leven and Melville. Died in 1857.

† Afterwards Sir Robert Anstruther of Balcaskie, M.P. for Fife, 1864-80, and for St. Andrews Burghs, 1885, till his death in 1886.

‡ Afterwards Sir Alexander Kinloch of Gilmerton. Died in 1912.

far as *I* can see. Mrs. Munro is a great acquisition, and always contrives to appear and *disappear* at the right moment, while dear old "Park," * as we call him, is as happy as possible, having his missus to campaign with him. . . .

Malta, Sunday, 5th March.—We arrived in a gale at 12.30 last night, and we are to disembark at one to-day. The Coldstream are on shore already, and we both occupy the Lazaretto Barracks. I have not time to write more for the Marseilles steamer starts in half an hour. . . .

In due time we reached Malta and disembarked on the Lazaretto Island, every available corner of the barracks and forts at Valetta being already occupied, or being prepared for daily-expected regiments. The Lazaretto—as its name implies—was not an inviting place of residence; when the tents were pitched for our three battalions no space was left on the rough and rocky island for a parade, much less a drill-ground. A score or two of the new Minié rifles had been brought with us, and the companies began their instruction in turn in the use of the weapon which was to supersede our old friend Brown Bess. It was not till several weeks afterwards that the whole battalion was supplied with this modern rifle, nor had the conviction of its superiority as yet shaken the belief that the bayonet and close quarters were the best tactics for the British soldier.

The arrival of the *Manilla* enabled me to complete the roll of the battalion, which, within two days previous to embarkation, had been receiving additions to its ranks. As we had only a narrow causeway to traverse in order

* Later Sir Campbell Munro of Limdertes, third Baronet.

to reach the mainland, there were but few opportunities for drill and instruction; nevertheless, the appearance and steadiness of all ranks left nothing to be desired at a review of the brigade which took place on the Florian Parade, by order of the general commanding at Malta, in honour of two French generals, Canrobert and Bosquet (both to become highly distinguished later on). At the request of General Canrobert, Grenadiers "formed square," into which he walked in order to note its exact formation. This was often alluded to as being the first occasion on which a Frenchman had been *inside* a square of British soldiers!

Lazaretto Barracks, Malta, March 10th.—We have no garrison duty to do, but they make us practise firing with the Minié rifle all day long on the sea shore. This is not particularly lively work; but still it is necessary. In a very short time our fellows will be capital shots. We practise on some rocks at a place called Sliema, about two miles from Valetta, and the scene is occasionally quite picturesque, as heaps of Maltese come and look at us; they stand gaping with astonishment at the size and *burliness* of our men; who, in their turn are delighted with a country where all the world is civil to them, and where good Marsala is only 5*d.* a bottle. At first I trembled at the probable results of this cheap drink, but I am glad and thankful to say that up to the present time the British Grenadier has, with only three exceptions, confined his potations within bounds. The poor little *Manilla* has not yet arrived, and I should be anxious about her, were it not that I heard for certain from one of the Rifles who arrived the day before yesterday in the *Himalaya*, that she had been seen at Gibraltar "all right." I fear she is a terribly slow tub. As for the *Himalaya*, she is the most enormous vessel I ever beheld. I saw her come in at one o'clock in the morning,

and she had the appearance of a huge floating phantom as she glided noiselessly into the harbour.

Nothing can exceed the beauty of the palaces here. The old knights fully understood the advantages of a good house, and some of the *auberges*, as they are called, are wonderfully good specimens of architecture. The staircase in the Auberge Castile where the 68th Regiment is quartered is one of the most beautiful things I ever saw. I have not bought a horse yet, but shall certainly get one, if not two, of these Barb animals, which are very hardy and active, though small.

A steamer has just come in with the 33rd Regiment on board; God knows where so many men are to be placed; the 93rd and Rifles are under canvas, and there are still four regiments to come!

Malta (no date).—The excitement of arrival in a strange place, and the bustle of settling ourselves being over, life becomes somewhat monotonous. I hear on all sides hopes loudly expressed that this state of things may not last, but that we may either go on at once or go back at once. At last our brigade is complete, the Fusiliers having arrived on Saturday night after a nineteen days' passage in that old tub the *Simoon*. The screw broke down on the average once a day, and they had to sail nearly the whole way. I must say we have reason to congratulate ourselves on our voyage in the *Ripon*, which, independent of her safety, is a most capital ship both in speed and comfort. At this moment there is not a ship in the harbour. The only steamer there was, the *Emu*, sailed yesterday for Constantinople with 1000 tons of coal for the fleet, which is, I am told, running very short of fuel. The 44th has arrived from Gibraltar; the 4th is hourly expected, and is to be encamped on the glacis behind our Lazaretto. The troops are put up in the oddest way here: three or four regiments are under

canvas, one in a graveyard, another on a slope of a glacis, another in a ditch, and another on a rocky ridge. The Rifles are in a rope walk. The 50th are in hammocks in the dockyard. However, it is most creditable to the authorities here that they should have found any room for them at all. . . .

23rd March.—Our inspection came off to-day. We had to march nearly four miles round to the Floriana parade ground, where we formed, and marched past. There was a large assembly as you may imagine, chiefly consisting of critics from the various regiments here, and as I have not been across to Valetta since, I cannot tell you what their opinions were; but I fancy that, as usual, we astonished them with our rocklike steadiness as each company of 49 file wheeled—as the serjeant-major feelingly observed—“like a brick wall”! The only mistakes that we made were, as usual, caused by the commanding officers, who sadly want practice; while our brigadier is rather too sharp upon them at first, and expects everything to go smoothly all at once.

Last night I dined with General Ferguson; it was a military dinner, so rather dull. His *cuisine* is perfect, which enabled me to find a resource when conversation flagged. The General is evidently *the* popular man of the place; the Governor's dinners are voted nothing to the General's or the Admiral's. The latter is also a very popular man—Houston Stewart by name; * next in popularity comes the Bishop of Gibraltar, whom every one speaks well of; he resides here entirely. The Lushington dinner was more amusing. Mr. L. † is, I find, the

† Afterwards Admiral of the Fleet Sir Houston Stewart, G.C.B., third son of Sir Michael Shaw Stewart, fifth Baronet of Greenock and Blackhall. Died in 1875.

‡ Henry Lushington, Chief Secretary to the Government of Malta. Tennyson dedicated *The Princess* to him, and he was author of various works in poetry and prose. He died in 1855.

brother of a man whom F. will recollect our meeting at the Laws' some time ago; he is the Solon or law-giver of the Maltese.

Sunday, 26th March.—We have had great fun with some French Chasseurs who put into Malta for coal. An immense deal of fraternization took place. I went on board one of the French ships, where I found two companies of Chasseurs de Vincennes and some sappers. We sent them off from our canteen a lot of cigars, oranges, cheese, etc., at which the excitement knew no bounds, the more so as the man I sent in charge of the present, was a certain Sergeant Dobbs, who stands about 6 feet 4½ inches in his stockings, and who was accompanied by two men of the Queen's Company.

We are all very well I am glad to say, but rather bored at staying here so long. The French are bound for Gallipoli, from which place they are going to trace a base of operations for the army. Sir G. Brown is, I believe, going to do the same with some of our sappers and the Rifles.

Everyone is practising packsaddles and mule bags. I look on and bide my time, as I am convinced I can beat the whole of them with a little Maltese cart which I am going to buy; it takes all to pieces and will go anywhere. My Arab steed will draw it capitally and all my worldly goods will go into it.

30th.—We are naturally much disappointed at the news from England not being of a more precise kind. The Rifles had positively embarked in anticipation of Brown's arrival, and now they say even they, who were to be our advanced guard, are not going for a week. What can you all be about leaving seventeen regiments kicking their heels here so long? I never was so sick of any place as I am of Malta; there are neither the

agrémens of England nor the active pursuits of service, and if they do not move us soon it will prove to us as Capua did to Hannibal of old.

We have had a number of visitors already from Italy, who have come by the steamers from Naples on spec. of finding friends here; the club, therefore, presents a very motley scene each evening. There are still some Frenchmen here, who have put in, as their predecessors the Chasseurs did, for coals, and cannot get them. The fraternization is most complete. They, as well as we, are bound for Gallipoli, but I still linger in hopes of seeing the 1st Division, at least, at Constantinople, for I do not think the Duke of Cambridge will like the life at Gallipoli . . .

Lady Errol goes on with her husband to the East, which is a bold measure, I must say.*

2nd April.—I took a long walk yesterday to St. Paul's Bay where, as the legend runs, the Apostle was driven ashore, either on a board or on a broken piece of the ship. It is a beautiful bay, very much shut in by two little islands, on one of which is a statue of St. Paul which can be seen for miles. The usual amount of chapels and oratories that are to be found in all places of scriptural interest in a Catholic country are scattered about. You never saw such a wretched lot of people as the peasants are; they appear like mummies, as if the heat of the summer sun dried up the little vitality they originally had. Poor creatures, the price of provisions affects them terribly.

6th.—The French troops continue to pour in towards the East, and three more steamers containing Zouaves and Artillery arrived to-day. It reflects no little credit on the French Marine that they should have found so many

* Lord Errol (nineteenth Earl) was serving in the Rifle Brigade. He died in 1891.

steam transports, and have already sent 5000 or 6000 men to Gallipoli, while the Queen of the Ocean cannot—literally cannot—move us from Malta. There is not in the harbour at this moment one vessel fit to go; and the Admiralty is going to send an old hulk, the *Ceylon*, that is dignified by the title of guardship, though she has no rigging, in tow of a small steamer, and so take one regiment, while the *Vesuvius*, a man-of-war steamer that won't steam, is to be towed also by a hired tug.

In the meanwhile Russia is across the Danube.

The general impression is that we are to go last, and to Constantinople, which is a great improvement on Gallipoli, besides being nearer to the scene of operations. We are, however, inundated with "shaves," so I never believe any of the reports unless they come from England, and even there you seem equally in the dark as to the real truth.

9th.—At last I think there are symptoms of our moving; we know at least that we are to go in the *Golden Fleece*, the *Vulcan* and the *Kangaroo*, three of the best steamers, and the admiral thinks that either on, or very soon after, the 14th, we shall be off. Constantinople is, I believe, our destination, as Lord Stratford requires troops there on account of the Greeks who are giving some trouble.

There is one point in which the beginning of this war is similar to the beginning of the last, and that is the utter inefficiency of the Ordnance Authorities. The Rifles have literally gone on with 30 rounds only of ammunition, the said ammunition being our practice cartridges, so that all our ball firing has been necessarily stopped, there not being near ammunition enough in the island for us. There appears to be no chance of our getting Minié rifles, so that the practice we have had goes for nothing! The rifle ammunition is so badly made, that I very much

question whether it will prove serviceable after a week's rough usage on the march. A steamer came in yesterday from England with some men—transfers—for regiments which are proceeding to Turkey and are already here, and the men proved to be entirely unequipped; so much so that the general had to send to two of the garrison regiments for arms and accoutrements for them. The 47th Regiment has gone on without tents or field equipment. Altogether such a glorious hash as there is among the pen and ink swells, would do credit to the war administration of a century ago.

I suppose, as usual, everything will come right in the end; but that is not the way things should be done by a great nation like us, and an army without ammunition, a commissariat with a Mr. B. as an agent, steamers without steam, and a force already landed in Turkey without anyone to command it, would lead a casual observer to imagine that our chances of success would be limited to the force of accident, or the special interposition of Providence. I must conclude with saying that this is strictly *entre nous*, and that I hope you will not disclose these revelations to anyone, for I shall be fearfully responsible if I am found out. You recollect the Duke's complaints about officers writing home their views of the state of affairs. At the siege of St. Sebastian did your men carry their knapsacks when storming?

12th.—We are holding ourselves in readiness for a start, as Lord Raglan is hourly expected, and Bentinck thinks we shall be off as soon as he arrives. All the rest of the troops are gone, the last having sailed yesterday; they none of them know where they are going to: some say Gallipoli, others Varna. I am rather inclined in favour of the latter place, where they say the Turks have not an adequate force for so important a position. I see the *Golden Fleece* coming into harbour, and hope

she may be our vessel, as Bentinck says the Grenadiers are to go the first of the Brigade. We are all in high spirits at the prospect of moving on at last, "on avait déjà commencé à conjuguer le verb s'ennuyer" in this hot hole. I fancy we shall find it still cool, if not cold, in Turkey, for I hear of frosts even at Constantinople.

16th, *Easter Sunday*.—Here we are still on Easter Sunday, just six weeks since we landed, a sad waste of time for all parties. However, we only await our chief's arrival; he is expected on Wednesday, and then we shall be off. The next question is whither? You all say Gallipoli, I say Constantinople *en route* to Varna and the Crimea.

I had a letter two days ago from an officer in the Rifles giving an account of their landing at Gallipoli. He described it as a wretched looking town; their camp is at a place called Bulaïr, ten miles from Gallipoli, where the engineers have marked out a camp for the whole force, he says; but this must be a mistake, as no water is to be found within a mile, and not much of it when found. Wood, too, is not plentiful, so that the prospects of the Gallipoli division are not bright; the more so as, up to the time he wrote, no mules or horses could be procured. Talking of horses and mules, I have bought a very nice little Barb and hold my hand till I get to my destination before I get another; the horses here are some of them good, but the dealers are as great, if not greater rogues than the London fraternity; a good many of our fellows have been taken in by them. The chief difficulty lies in the want of transports for the horses, and unless the Admiral here, who is the best old boy in the world, gives us some vessel or other we shall have to leave about 60 or 70 horses behind us. Our parental Government tells us we are to purchase horses and mules as best we can, and then, when bought, is very sorry that they cannot

be conveyed to the scene where their services are most wanted. However, all these anomalies will, no doubt, be at last rectified, for I cannot believe that our chief when he arrives will approve of the ludicrous orders regarding baggage and its transport that have been issued by Sir G. Brown to his Division. . . .

21st.—We are now positively embarking! Our destination is Scutari, where we shall occupy the Guards' barracks for some time. Our ship is the *Golden Fleece*, a very fine screw steamer. We shall be eleven hundred souls on board, exclusive of the crew. Lord Raglan is hourly expected, and we wait for his signal, as the authorities do not dare to send us off without his sanction; so I do not think we shall sail before to-morrow morning early, particularly as it is blowing hard. Sixteen thousand men have thus passed through Malta during the last six weeks, and probably a finer force never left the shores of England. Our game will now, I suppose, begin in earnest and I hope my next letter to you will give you some soldiering adventures of a more stirring kind.

Same date.—You will see, and with surprise, no doubt, that I still date my letters from this island, despite of the warning I gave you in my last that we should probably sail before the next mail could start for England. At any rate I think I may safely say that we are off at last, for at this moment the Coldstream are embarking on board the *Vulcan*, which is lying close off the Lazaretto; our horses are being slung up the sides of the *Golden Fleece*, which is our vessel and the finest of the three; while the Fusiliers are packing their baggage on board the *Kangaroo*, another fine screw steamer, and they say the fastest of them all. Bentinck * was coming with us, but has changed his mind

* Lieut.-Col. (afterwards Sir Henry, K.C.B.) Bentinck, commanding the Brigade of Guards. Appointed to the 4th Division on the death of Sir George Cathcart at Inkerman. Died in 1878.

and goes in the *Kangaroo*, as he will thus arrive the first at Constantinople, whither, you will be glad to hear, we are bound instead of Gallipoli. I do not know the exact reason of the alteration, nor can we consider it positively final, as Lord Raglan has to confirm it on his arrival; but there seems no doubt that we are to proceed to Scutari to occupy that fine barrack that forms so commanding an object on the Asiatic side facing the Golden Horn. This will do very well, as I should have been frantic at losing the sight of Constantinople, and if we stay but a week I shall see enough to give me a fair idea of the Queen of Cities. It is blowing rather fresh from the east, so that I do not think we shall sail before to-morrow morning under any circumstances; if, therefore, we have any luck we shall be at Constantinople by the 27th at the latest. . . .

10 p.m.—Still no news of Lord Raglan, so I suppose we shall be off before he arrives. I have just been indulging in a farewell dinner with the 68th Regiment, with whom we have fraternized immensely, and who are the nicest set of fellows I ever met. . . . You will have heard, I dare say, of the adventure the *Fury* steam vessel had in the Black Sea: she took a Russian prize while on a cruise reconnoitring Sebastopol. The Russians sallied out with three frigates, and the poor *Fury* was obliged to cut her tow rope and leave her prize, which she could not sink, as after taking the crew out as prisoners, she found that one unfortunate man had been left behind.

Our men are all embarked and in high force; all of us are well except Cadogan, who is suffering from gout or some such ailment.

The night before last we had a ball—positively a ball—and I found myself spinning round in a valse as of old. It was rather a dreary affair, however, as men were to women as ten to one. The night before that the Brigade gave a dinner to the Governor and General; a measure

the policy of which admits of doubt to say the least of it. It went off, notwithstanding, very well, as Houston Stewart, the Admiral, is such a right good fellow that he carried all before him and nothing could exceed the general hilarity; they proposed Ridley's health (Ridley in the Fusiliers) in connection with the Victualling Department, and the roars of laughter that followed were tremendous. Everyone is expecting the brevet, is there any truth in it? I fear not; it will give Colonel Wood the Regiment, with Reynardson as first and Hamilton as second Major, but I cannot believe that they would give no hint of their intentions to the unfortunate Colonels of Battalions who would lose the insignificant sum of £12,000 apiece! *

We had been more than six weeks on our rocky island, when we received the welcome order to move on. Peace rumours had been persistent. The Turks had made so brave and energetic resistance on the Danube, especially at Silistria, that the immediate aid to the armies of the Sultan in the Balkans appeared unnecessary.

My colonel and I messed together, and I soon became aware that a close attention to regimental detail and drill was not suited to his temperament, his conversation always turning to the movements of Divisions and Army Corps. As I was allowed a second horse I bought a small Tunisian barb whose good action I noticed one day in a carriage in the streets of Valetta. He was too small to ride on parade but as active as a cat, of which he very

* The purchase system in the army was abolished by Royal Warrant on 20th July, 1871. The regulation price of commissions ranged from £450 for an infantry ensigncy to £7250 for a lieut.-colonelcy of Household Cavalry; in addition to which custom had sanctioned over-regulation payments, which in some cases exceeded the regulation scale. Officers holding saleable commissions in 1871 received the regulation price thereof out of the public funds.

soon gave me proof, as almost on the first day I rode him he shied at the sentry at the entrance to the causeway, jumped the low parapet, and landed on all fours upon the rocks below. I was so pleased by thus being saved from a bad accident that I resolved never, never to part with him, and he fulfilled the duties of hack, baggage pony, and general service during the whole war. I then brought him to England, my sisters rode him in Rotten Row, and frequently with hounds, as he was a good jumper, and finally he drew my mother's pony-carriage at our home in the country. Owing to his African origin I called him “Scipio.”

CHAPTER VI

THE CAMP AT SCUTARI

April-June, 1854

At length the order arrived to re-embark, our destination being Scutari.

S.S. *Golden Fleece*, N.E. of Eubœa,
25th April, 1854.

. . . We sailed, as we intended, at 6 a.m. on the 22nd.

There was a heavy swell and a good deal of wind, so that no sooner were we out of the harbour than a more than usual amount of sea-sickness ensued. I, shut up altogether and with Bob Anstruther, who had the same cabin with me, remained prostrate for thirty hours in my berth. The wind was dead ahead all the way to Cape Matapan, which we did not sight for forty-eight hours after leaving Malta, our ship being only an auxiliary screw of 350 tons h.p., which is nothing when the tonnage of the vessel is considered as amounting to no less than 2500 tons! The Coldstream are on board the *Vulcan*, one of Her Majesty's troopships, or, as the sailors call them, "Lobster boats." She, of course, was beaten out of sight in about two hours, as her h.p. is even less than ours. We have our Brigadier on board, besides a company of the Coldstream, so that our numbers are over 1100 besides the crew. The ship is quite a new one, her voyage out with the 77th being her first performance; so everything is by way of being very smart, though in reality she is not near so comfortable a vessel as the dear old *Ripon*. We are to stop at Gallipoli to deliver some letters, etc., and then . . .

I am disappointed with the Greek islands ; but perhaps the weather may have something to do with it, as for the last two days there has been a haze over the horizon which did not give the coast a fair chance. The scene last night at sunset was pretty : we were passing the Gulf of Nauplia, and the island of Hydra was about three miles off on our port bow : I began to feel some of the classic dreaminess that a first sight of Greece cannot fail to produce on a traveller's mind, especially upon that of one who for ten years was as familiar with the name of every bay, promontory, and mountain on this coast, as the captain of a penny steamer is with the quays on the Thames. We unluckily passed Cape Colonna at midnight, so we missed the sight of the Temple of Minerva, which is so conspicuous a mark on the cliffs. A great deal of chaff went on in the evening among the Etonians, as to how many times each or everyone had been "reported" for not knowing the ancient and modern names of the various islands we passed : and, no doubt, this will begin again as we pass Tenedos and Troy, as we hope to do this evening.

10 *p.m.*—We are now passing them, and unluckily there is no moon, so we have to imagine a great deal. The jolly old Turks seem all alive, for lights are twinkling on either shore, and even at this moment the voices on the European side may be distinctly heard. A solitary French two-decker lay in Besika Bay, and as we passed her band struck up a well-known air which roused us from silence, and, springing into the rigging, we gave the Frenchman three such cheers as only 1200 English lungs are capable of. Shortly after we rounded the point, and passed between the castles that command the entrance to the Straits. We are now slowly steaming against the current and expect to be at Gallipoli by midnight.

26th, 8 p.m.—We are now steaming up the Sea of Marmora, and hope to anchor off Scutari at daylight to-morrow. . . . I am convinced, however, from all I have heard to-day that we were never intended to move on so soon, for no one expected us at Gallipoli, nor does anyone expect us at the Bosphorus, so we shall be under the command of Sir de Lacy Evans for a day or two till Lord Raglan arrives, which he will, I fancy, on the 30th. We have passed a most amusing day at Gallipoli; the town itself is a thoroughly wretched looking Oriental city: the roofs of the houses meeting across the streets, and thus affording the only shade that can be found. A few bazaars with old Turks sitting in them smoking, Greeks chattering, and Frenchmen *sacré-ing*, served to make up a stranger scene than any of us had ever before witnessed. The place is entirely in the hands of the French who, as usual, have the best of everything, though, I must own, in a very unscrupulous way. Their force, amounting to nearly 25,000 men, is encamped close round the town, and already they seem quite at home. The truth is their system is as perfect as ours is defective, and consequently each brigade and division landed *complete* in every respect, while a well-organized commissariat and staff give them a fearful advantage over our people. I must say, however, that what staff we have here has done wonders, and our little division of 5000 men is doing very well, though encamped ten miles from the town. I met several officers of the regiments in camp, and they were all sallying forth on foraging expeditions, for the Turks won't bring anything to us, but are quite willing to sell if we will fetch what we want. I had a long talk also with a French captain of Chasseurs whose camp I visited: they condoled with *la Garde* at having such rough service, saying at the same time that "*puisque la guerre est notre métier,*" the more we have of it the better.



CAMP OF THE 3RD GRENADIERS AT SOUTARI. 1854.

1. Scutari Barracks.
2. Great Hospital.
3. Hospital Tent, Grenadier Guards.
4. Col. Wood's marquee.
5. Capt. Higginson's tent (Clarke at the door).
6. Col. Hood's tent.
7. Col. Cadogan's tent.
8. J. Burgoyne's tent.

9. Prince Edward's tent (the Prince at the door and Col. Reynardson).
10. A Turkish tent hired for the servants.
11. Sir Jas. Fergusson's tent. (A French one.)
12. Col. Cox's tent.
13. Orderly Room tent.
14. } Women's tents.
15. }
16. Armourers' hut.

17. 19th Regiment's Camp.
18. 77th Do. Do.
19. 88th Do. Do.
20. 7th Do. Do.
21. 23rd Do. Do.
22. Capt. Higginson.
23. Col. Hood, and next to him Col. Hamilton and Lieut. Davi
24. Sir James Fergusson.

27th.—Anchored close off Scutari point, and not 200 yards from the Seraglio. I can now say at last that we have seen the Bosphorus. As is usual when your expectation is roused to a great height, we were horribly disappointed with the first sight of Constantinople. As we approached sufficiently near to distinguish the houses we all exclaimed, "Why, it is like London or Liverpool with a touch of Virginia Water and the Pavilion at Brighton!" Substitute chimneys for minarets and the illusion would have been complete. As, however, we drew closer, and the Bosphorus opened a little more to the view, I could not but acknowledge the scene to be very beautiful. . . .

Our camp was pitched on an undulating plain bounded on the east by the great Necropolis of Scutari. The lofty cypresses, which for centuries had sheltered the picturesque graves of many generations of the followers of Mahomet, afforded welcome shade to our camp during the early and midday sun; the huge barracks, afterwards the scene of Miss Nightingale's patriotic work, stood between us and the Bosphorus, partially concealing the domes and minarets of Stamboul, and the entrance to the Golden Horn. The Sea of Marmora and the Prince's Islands lay in full view to the west, the whole forming a picturesque enclosure to the ever-increasing encampment in course of formation, to receive regiments and brigades, as they successively arrived. Though we were always busy, receiving our new rifle and a consignment of baggage ponies, intended for the conveyance of our ammunition and impedimenta, weeks passed before we gained any definite idea as to our ultimate destination, or the nature of the service we were to undertake.

Plenty of opportunity, therefore, was left to all of us to cross over to the city, which at that date did not offer to the tourist, or even foreign residents, such facilities for visiting its historic places of interest as the traveller of the present day enjoys.

No steam pinnace or motor-boat profaned the classic waters of the Bosphorus over which the caique moved with the grace and precision which many centuries of practice had given to the brawny race of "caïquejies." The main street of Pera was the only available thoroughfare for vehicles, the one hotel, still called "Misseri," established by the dragoman to whom Kinglake so often alludes in *Eothen*, afforded good accommodation and was our chief rendezvous. Previous to our arrival, admission to the mosques could only be obtained by firman; but of course this rule was relaxed in our favour, not, however, without much heartburning in the breasts of the faithful. I was able to visit and admire the glories of San Sofia and Sultan Achmet without difficulty, avoiding, however, the risk of profaning the floor of the sacred edifices by covering my uniform boots with a huge pair of slippers.

A trip to the Sweet Waters enabled us to study and admire the veiled beauties by whom it was daily thronged. Round the old walls of Stamboul we roamed unimpeded; and after a fatiguing afternoon's walk, a bath in the great *hamaam*, given with a thorough completeness to which we were unaccustomed, afforded us a sense of enjoyment, which only needed the complement of a chibouque and cup of coffee brought to one's side by a silent attendant. I had no opportunity of being presented to Lord Stratford, whom I knew well in after years. Our

return to camp at night was not always an easy matter, as the by-streets leading to the ferry were so badly lighted, and the unpaved track so difficult to follow, that I more than once had to draw my sword to keep off wild dogs, the only scavengers of the place.

Camp, Scutari, 3rd May.—I am now writing in my tent seated on a Turkish mat, with a paper lantern hanging to the pole; the tall cypress trees a few yards off hide the moon's face, though not her light, which catches the angles and turbans on the grey tombstones, and makes a strong contrast between the life on one side of the low stone wall and the city of the dead on the other; for you must know that this cypress grove extends for a mile or two, and is completely peopled with the quaint monuments of the Turks. . . .

. . . The Tattoo has just beat, and, with the last notes of "God save the Queen," the lights in the tents have disappeared, and no sound is heard but the howling of the innumerable dogs that are the scavengers of this country, and watch in troops after dark round the camp, the more audacious sometimes venturing inside the tent lines, only, however, to meet with a warm reception in the shape of a bullet from a revolver, which some wary ensign has loaded in anticipation of a visit. During the day some of the younger officers sally out across country with their guns, returning with three or four couple of quail, which form an agreeable addition to the *rational* meal. Both yesterday and to-day we were immensely amused with the appearance of a regiment of Bashi-Bazouks, or irregular horse, that passed by the camp towards Scutari, having travelled all the way from Damascus. I never saw such creatures; Cossacks must be civilized in comparison. Imagine a string of wild Arabs on wretched screws, armed with curious firelocks,

and headed by a bearded old chief and a sort of "medicine man" with a tin pot on his head, who at short intervals gives a peculiar howl or prolonged cry, while two men on each side of him keep up a drumming on little drums like cannon balls cut in half. I made a salaam to the chief and received a gracious acknowledgment; but I assure you the faces of the British Grenadiers when they saw their *allies* would have killed you with laughter.

Yesterday I rode to the top of a high hill called Bulgurhi, well known to visitors to Constantinople, from it there is a complete panorama, and certainly the view is worth a journey from England to see. Nearly the whole of the Bosphorus, winding like a huge river, lies at your feet, and the city and its minarets stand out in strong relief against the setting sun, which is wonderfully reflected beyond in the Sea of Marmora; on the other side a vast hilly open country, across which the caravan track to Broussa is the only road. . . .

4th.—I have been over to Constantinople twice and seen a great deal, though there is little beyond the bazaars and the streets themselves. I took a serjeant with me, wishing to give him a treat. His bearskin cap quite put my forage cap into the shade; all the guards turned out to it, and while I was treated only to a "carry," my companion got a "present." Of course I bargained for sashes and silks; of course I went into a café and smoked chibouks and nargilehs and drank coffee *à la Turquie*. Every Englishman does, and we are rapidly becoming Oriental in our habits. I saw Lord Raglan, who was most gracious and looked well. Already his arrival has smoothed many difficulties; brigades of divisions are formed, and the requisite staff appointed to each. We have the Highland Brigade, 79th, 42nd, and 93rd, in our division, under Sir Colin

Campbell. We shall slightly astonish any opponents who may have the honour of meeting us.

Altogether we are doing very well, and things look very promising. I have great faith in our army here and at Gallipoli; and though no sensible man can do otherwise than regret that the Staff is not more efficient, I think that the members of it, inexperienced as they are, are made of such good stuff that they will soon learn their work. The baggage question is now being discussed: as I expected, Lord Raglan has treated the matter as a gentleman and a disciple of the Duke's would, by rather leaving it to officers to propose or suggest the requisite amount, than by dictating in a peremptory way what amount each officer should have. I have bought a pair of Turkish saddlebags into which I put *everything*, so capacious are they. I find nearly all are following my example and I believe rightly.

10th.—The plot seems thickening and troops are rapidly arriving. A troop of Horse Artillery has already come, having lost twelve horses on the voyage out of 220. The others are, however, reported in excellent condition. We have been most unlucky in the weather; it has rained in bucketsful for two days, so much so that even our tents, which are right good ones, could not stand the continual downpouring, and the drip would not be denied an *entrée* into our domiciles. To-day, however, we have a hot sun, and the contents of each tent are spread out on the grass in picturesque confusion. Strange to say no one has felt the slightest ill effects from the damp, and we have no case of rheumatism amongst us.

The Duke of Cambridge arrived to-day. . . .

The more I see and the more I hear, the more I am convinced we have to learn. Our system is imperfect, and our equipment *villainous*; till the former is on a better footing (I mean especially as regards commissariat and quarters),

and the latter more adapted for service, the fine physical power and pluck of the British soldier will prove unavailing. An officer of the Rifles told me yesterday that he never felt really humbled before, but having been encamped at Gallipoli for a month next to a regiment of Zouaves, the superiority of the French over the English equipment did not leave a doubt in the mind of the most prejudiced observer as to the inequality in respect of efficiency. The Zouaves carried heavier weights than the Rifles with ease, while the Rifles fell out by dozens under their burdens. So much am I convinced of the truth of this, that I intend as quietly as I can to abolish stocks, etc., and see if we cannot make a good start when we do take the field. Horses are the great difficulty, all our baggage animals are picketed in front of the camp, and the scenes of confusion at night are ludicrous to a degree.

Last night the French Ambassador, Baraguay d'Hilliers, gave a ball to Prince Napoleon and Lord Raglan. Some of us went, I among the number; the sight was most interesting, though the crowd was too great for much dancing. The most conspicuous personages were Prince Napoleon, Saint-Arnaud the French Commander-in-Chief, Lord Stratford, Lord Raglan, and Baraguay d'Hilliers himself. Imagine my dancing a galop and valse with an Armenian damsel, who spun along as if she had been in a London ballroom all her life. They all speak French, and are very *spirituelles*. I think there must have been soldiers of all nations there, for I never saw such a brilliant variety of uniforms.

There goes the 93rd Highlanders; they are just marching into their encamping ground amid the cheers of the other regiments. They came from Gallipoli yesterday with the Rifles. . . .

21st.—. . . A party of us were discussing about ten days ago the probability of our getting leave for a day

or two in order to make an excursion into Asia Minor. Seizing a good opportunity, I managed to get leave for four days for five of us, the Fusiliers also having to the number of four succeeded in getting the same leave. So last Tuesday we put ourselves, our saddle bags, and saddles, revolvers and two dragomen on board the Turkish steamer that started from the Golden Horn at 6 a.m. for Modania, a village on the S.E. coast of the Sea of Marmora, and the Port of Broussa. . . . The steamer was full of Turks, and among them a jolly fat old boy, the Collector of Revenues at Broussa, who was returning thither from Stamboul with his harem and whole family. Each Turk as he came on board spread his carpet, kicked off his shoes, and with his legs curled up under him composed himself to smoke, and the bubbling of 50 or 60 nargilehs or water pipes was the only sound that indicated life amongst them. I found five or six Arabs from Algeria dressed in their "burnous," and in them only. One spoke a little French, and we had a long discourse about Abdel Kader, to whom they were going (he lives, you know, at Broussa) on a sort of pilgrimage.* I hinted that the withdrawal of a large portion of the French Algerian army from that country on account of the Russian campaign might have something to do with their visit, at which they laughed approvingly. . . .

. . . We made a wretched sort of breakfast on *pilau* cooked with bad oil, and were heartily glad to reach Modania at 2 o'clock. This is a pretty little village situated on the shore of one of the many bays that run into the coast of the Sea of Marmora, and is chiefly

* Born in 1807, Abdel Kader, Emir of Mascara, became famous by his heroic resistance to the French in Algeria. From 1831 till 1847 he waged incessant war with them, often victoriously; but was at length compelled to surrender to the Duc d'Aumale. He was imprisoned in France, till Napoleon III. released him in 1852, on condition that he should not return to Algeria. He died, probably at Mecca, in 1873.

inhabited by Greeks of the worst sort, who, if they dared, would cut the throat of every traveller. Here, after a vast amount of squabbling and bargaining we succeeded in getting horses, *such* brutes! only two had bridles, the others only halters; however, on went our saddles and away we started in high spirits. The road lay at first through vineyards by the shore of the bay, reminding one much of the shores of the Italian lakes: after an hour thus we struck across a ridge of hills and came in sight of the valley in which Broussa lies. I never saw anything so beautiful, the extraordinary luxuriance of the vegetation, and the absence of hedges, walls, or fences to separate the cultivated ground into fields gave the country more the look of a park than of anything else. In the distance lay Broussa, at the foot of Mount Olympus. . . . Four hours and a half riding brought us to the town, and we were most agreeably surprised at finding an exceedingly comfortable inn kept by an Italian instead of a wretched "khan" as we had expected. Our party received the addition of a young German Prince and his bear-leader, the former travelling incognito to our great amusement—for as I had seen him at the ball at the French Embassy, I, of course, recognized him and made the rest of the party aware who he was. Consequently we adopted the plan of appearing totally ignorant of his identity, and immediately after dinner set him to work making punch for the whole party; the result being that after two hours conviviality he returned to his apartment in a most satisfactory state of royal inebriety. . . . The baths are most interesting. Hot sulphur springs flow into a large swimming bath, where you have the novel sensation of a swim in hot water. The heat is very great; but they say you get used to it, and the water is supposed to have wonderful properties of curing liver complaints and such like diseases.

We next paid a *visite de cérémonie* to Abdel Kader, to

whom we had sent in the morning requesting permission as English officers to pay our respects to "un si grand guerrier." We were received in a square *Turkishly* furnished room darkened with red curtains. Here, seated on divans, we smoked chibouks with amber mouthpieces and drank delicious coffee, while the Emir was at prayers. At last he appeared and, bowing to the party, seated himself *à la Turque* in the midst. He is a very pale, interesting-looking Arab about 40 years old; a most melancholy expression rendered a countenance, otherwise handsome, rather painful to look at. He speaks no language but Arabic, so all we said was through an Interpreter. It was explained to him that Strange Jocelyn,* who was one of our party, was a relation of Lord Londonderry's; on hearing which he insisted on Jocelyn seating himself beside him, and seemed pleased to shake his hand. I suspect he is meditating a *coup* of some sort; though the surveillance still exercised over him is very great, and escape would be impossible.

Next morning we were up at 3.30 and started soon after five for Mount Olympus. After we had ridden up a most beautiful hill for three hours, our scoundrels of guides told us the horses could go no further; so away we went most innocently on foot, with one of the guides who purposely led us wrong, and at the end of two hours' walking we found ourselves only on the top of a small mountain with just a patch or two of snow. We were furious and vowed vengeance; however, the cur would go no further, so we started, after a council of war, without guides, trusting to pocket compasses and common sense. After 5 or 6 hours' wading through torrents and up to our knees in half-melted snow I succeeded in reaching the summit by one route, while Russell, Balgonie, and Anstruther, arrived by the other: my companion, Sir

* Succeeded his nephew as fifth Earl of Roden in 1880. Served in the Scots Fusilier Guards in the Crimea, and died in 1897.

James Fergusson,* had been caught by the rarefaction of the air and stopped about 150 yards from the top. The view is perfectly glorious and beats all the Swiss scenes I ever saw; but I had only a glimpse, for the clouds were very unsettled, and a mist had come on soon after I reached the top obliging me to descend rapidly, not, however, before I had followed the tracks of, and seen, two magnificent bears. It made our fingers tingle to see such game, and I longed for a rifle and a trifle more time. However, that could not be, so back I went, picked up my companions, and we reached Broussa after a fatiguing but delightful day at 8 o'clock. The inn boasted an excellent cook, and we did full justice to his merits, as also to the Broussa wine, which is excellent, and much resembles Chablis.

At four next morning we were off again, *à cheval* for Modania, bidding adieu with regret to Broussa and its valley, where I would willingly become a settler, were it not for all of you; for even dear old England cannot show aught so lovely. At Modania we hired two caïques with six oars each to return to Scutari. A long hot day we passed rowing along the shore till evening, when we struck across to the Prince's Islands. A thunderstorm overtook us about half way and I feared for about two hours that our race was run, and that no human power could save us so violent was the storm; but our boats behaved well, our crew were strong Greek boatmen, and a Power stronger than the elements directed us at last into a little bay where we ran ashore. The island proved to be one of the smallest of the cluster and is called Antigone. There in a

* Was elected M.P. for Ayrshire while serving in the trenches before Sebastopol, where he was wounded. Under-Secretary of State for India, 1866-7, for the Home Office, 1867-8; Governor successively of South Australia, New Zealand, and Bombay; Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, 1886-91; Postmaster-General, 1891-2. Killed in the Jamaica earthquake, 1907.

wretched Greek café we passed the night drenched to the skin, but very jolly notwithstanding. I succeeded in getting some eggs and an onion, with which I made an omelette which was highly approved of; and at half-past three, when day broke, we started for Scutari, which we reached at six after an eventful and most interesting expedition. We were horrified at hearing on our arrival that an officer of the 93rd Highlanders, Lieutenant McNish, had been drowned in crossing a watercourse, not four feet broad, the night before, during the very heavy thunder-storm that so nearly finished us. . . .

Our new and royal chief* is at us a great deal and is all for work. Lord Raglan is gone to Varna with Saint-Arnaud but returns soon, I believe. . . . The Cavalry are arriving and look very well. Each troop appears to have lost about six horses, but the others are in very good condition. I much doubt, however, whether their English shoes will stand these awful roads. The Artillery never go out without losing about 10 per cent. of their shoes. I am seriously thinking of shoeing my horses in the Turkish fashion.

30th.—The Fleet are frantic at having nothing to do, and talk of sending a few Turkish ships off Sevastopol in order to tempt the “Moskof” out, and then with all their steamers pounce upon them and destroy them at the moment of supposed victory. . . .

Lord Cardigan has appeared looking as usual highly important; whether his Hussar Brigade is to distinguish itself remains to be proved. . . . Our Division now only requires one more regiment to complete it, the 42nd. The 79th arrived three or four days ago, and are a very valuable addition.

* H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, who had command of the Guards' Brigade and the Highland Brigade, consisting of the 42nd, 79th, and 93rd.

Scutari, 4th June.—You see we are still in Asia, and for aught I know likely to remain, as there are no baggage horses for the Commissariat, and six officers of the Brigade are at this moment employed in scouring the country in search of bāt animals, trying to make up by the activity and zeal of individuals for the deficiency in these qualities on the part of the commissariat body. Whether this, and this only, is the cause of our delay I am not prepared to say, but it is difficult otherwise to account for it, for the supply of ammunition is sufficient for the present, and in every other respect our two divisions of infantry are ready for the field. . . . You seem very hot in England about the Crimea; so was I for some time, but from all I have heard since, I am inclined to doubt the attempt being made. The Fleet acknowledge Sevastopol to be too dangerous a game; and where is the siege train for a land attack? or where are we to land on a rock-bound coast? No! A total evacuation of the provinces, payment of the war expenses, the establishment of a strong government in the Principalities, and the strengthening of the border fortresses, is more our policy, in addition to the complete expulsion of Russia from Circassia and the Caucasus. All this is practicable, nay, comparatively easy. The other is a fearfully hazardous enterprise. The French now turn out to be as behindhand as ourselves: they have no artillery as yet in the field, nor cavalry; while we have both, though the latter are in such ridiculous numbers as to be scarce worth talking about. At the Sultan's field day which we had a few days ago a squadron and a half was all they could muster, though I own they looked and moved beautifully. . . .

. . . The heat is excessive—120 in the sun and 90 in the tents. Our divine service this morning, *al fresco* at 7 o'clock a.m., was necessarily curtailed on account of the heat. However, the men are very healthy; out of our large numbers, 950, we have but twenty-three ailing

and only eight are in the great hospital. . . . Strange to say, we have no trouble with our men about damaging property or trespassing in grounds, etc. I fully expected stringent measures would have been necessary, but I am glad to say the result has proved the contrary, and the provost marshal's duties are nominal. Rather an absurd scene happened the other day, in which the wife of a soldier in one of the regiments in Adam's brigade was the chief actor. She had lost her way while returning to barracks from Scutari, and inquired of a Turkish soldier by means of signs and gestures. Not being able clearly to understand his directions, she took his arm and made him escort her. On the road they met two Turkish women who, the instant they saw the Turk arm in arm with an infidel, *unveiled* too, darted at him, abused and spit upon him. The poor man, in a horrid fright, tried to make a bolt for it; but the English dame would not hear of it, and without a moment's hesitation "went for" the Turkish fair ones, knocked them both down and blackened both their eyes! After which she triumphantly resumed the arm of the Turkish soldier and returned to barracks.

The worst class here are the Greeks, who, whenever they quarrel, draw a knife and stick it into their opponent. This does not suit our fellows at all, who invariably polish off these fellows, knives and all, most relentlessly. . . .

From all I can hear from those well acquainted with the Russian army, the account we shall render of them, if we can get at them, will be fearful.

12th.—To-night is our last at Scutari. . . . There are 600 horses of one kind and another belonging to our division, and to give you some idea of their management I will quote this instance. All our baggage horses, amounting to seventy for the battalion, paraded to-day at one o'clock, and were marched to a wharf about a mile and a half off under the care of an officer of the Q.M.G.

department. The horses of the Coldstream followed at two o'clock and the Fusiliers at three. To the best of my belief, not a horse has as yet been embarked, it being now 8 p.m.! They found out on their arrival that the ship (the *Jason*) could not get near enough to the wharf, and the order arrived half an hour ago for the animals to be taken two miles further up the Bosphorus to another wharf, from which they are to be embarked to-morrow morning. You, who can understand fatigue parties kept eight hours needlessly doing nothing, horses kept standing in a row with nothing to eat or drink, with the prospect of remaining so all night, men in complete marching order obliged to mount sentry over them, will readily comprehend that we have just cause for complaint against the want of foresight and stupidity of the Staff: yet so it will be. However, a truce to grumbling, the more so as no remarks of mine can produce any good. We begin to take very kindly to our royal chief, who is a good fellow.

Having referred in a letter quoted above to the generally excellent conduct of our men while at Scutari, I must mention a little *contretemps* which happened before we left that place.

Returning one afternoon from a ride, I encountered the sergeant-major, evidently much distressed at having to inform me that some five or six of our men were lying helplessly drunk outside their tents. As no liquor of any description could be obtained except from the canteen tent, the cause of this discreditable occurrence had to be discovered, for the delinquents were none of them men addicted to drunkenness. I went with the sergeant-major immediately to the scene, which fortunately, being at the corner of our camp, had not attracted much notice. However, we descried lingering amongst the tents a vendor of

lemonade, with a large glass jar thereof hanging from his shoulders, the lemons floating in the inviting beverage. As if by inspiration, I ordered the man (who proved to be a Greek) to be brought before me and searched. Within the loose folds which covered his brawny chest, we found a large jar of "raki," the most pernicious spirit ever invented to tempt the unwary. Secure from the interference of the Moslem, to whom the degradation of an unbeliever would be the cause of contemptuous enjoyment, this dealer in cooling drinks was in the habit of slyly offering the more tempting liquor to the British soldier; who for the payment of less than a penny for a moment's enjoyment found himself in a very few minutes in a state of helpless insensibility. My indignation overpowered all prudence. Ordering the scoundrel to be laid on his back and pegged down, I had nearly half a pint of his own liquor poured down his throat; the rest was destroyed, and he was left for the inspection of all comers.

Our own unfortunate victims gradually recovered consciousness and were removed to the guard tent. About two hours afterwards, while changing my clothes for dinner, I made inquiries after our Greek friend, who was reported to be lying insensible, breathing heavily. Dinner was over and the hour of tattoo close at hand, when the sergeant-major came with his face betraying much gravity. He informed me that he thought the Greek was in a bad way, his breathing being fainter and his condition giving no evidence of returning consciousness. I went out to have a look, and returned to my tent with an uncomfortable feeling as to the possible result of my form of punishment. The last report just as I turned in was, "Much in

the same state, sir." "Still breathing?" I asked. "Yes, rather faintly." I directed a sentry to be placed over him, with orders to release the fellow if and when he came to himself. Sleep, however, was out of the question for me, and soon after midnight I arose and went to the scene where my act of summary justice had taken place. I confess the relief to my mind was very great when the sentry told me "he began kicking just now, sir, so I untied him and he walked out of camp without saying a word." I need hardly add he never reappeared in our camp.

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CHAPTER VII

PRELIMINARIES OF INVASION

June–September, 1854

By the middle of June the first Division, consisting of the Guards and Highlanders, was encamped at Varna preparing for an advance. For the first time we met the Zouaves, with whom we were destined during the subsequent winter to become fast friends; and I remember while we were disembarking on Varna beach a battalion of Zouaves was landing from the transports within a few hundred yards of us. Our red coats and bearskin caps presented a curious contrast to the half-oriental costume, tarbusch, caftan, and baggy trousers of these Algerian warriors; but friendly intercourse was immediately established, and I overheard their colonel say to his bandmaster, “Jouez-vous le God-saf?”—“Oui, mon colonel,” was the reply.—“Bien: jouez-le donc de suite.”

I also overheard a veteran in this corps so long accustomed to desert life remark, as he noticed the landing of some half-dozen or so of our soldiers' wives (who had found their way on board rather as stowaways than legitimate passengers, and after the voyage were looking singularly unattractive)—“Quelle prévoyance!”

After a fortnight or three weeks at Varna devoted to field days under our royal chief, we transferred our camp about ten miles up country to Aladyn, one of the most

picturesque and beautiful spots I ever saw. Woodland, turf, lake, combined to form an ideal camping ground ; but alas ! here our troubles began. From no apparent cause the cholera invaded and soon held us in its fatal grip. I do not care to dwell at any length on the trials and sufferings endured by all of us under this fearful scourge. No remedy suggested by the medical staff served to stay the plague, and we were freely permitted to make use of anything out of our private stores to palliate the sufferings of our men. I kept one poor fellow alive by half a dozen of Bass's pale ale ; but as soon as the supply gave out he died. As the disease was said to be non-contagious, the company officers nursed their men with much devotion in the hospital tents.

We subsequently transferred our camp to higher ground a few miles off, and here it was that I first recognized the great qualities of my new commanding officer, Colonel Grosvenor Hood.*

Having been formerly adjutant of the battalion he had afterwards performed the duties of the first major. On his taking up the command I was immediately conscious of his force of character and resolution. He invited me to live with him and we shared the same mess-tent, much to my advantage. It may be noted here that, during this trying time, my chief and I kept ourselves in good health by living chiefly on rice and the rough wine of the country mixed with water.

It was most distressing to know that, whatever our destination might be, our magnificent Brigade had already undergone severe loss, four hundred men dying, or being invalided through this fell disease. Comparatively few officers succumbed, though all of us suffered from dysentery.

* Hon. Francis Grosvenor, second son of second Viscount Hood. Born 1809 ; died in the trenches, 1854.

The brilliant success of the Turks at Silistria had arrested the efforts of the Russians to cross the Danube. For a time the idea prevailed that we were to attack and destroy Odessa, the great commercial port of the Black Sea, but the destruction of the naval stronghold and arsenal of Sebastopol was evidently the chief object both of the Emperor of the French and of the British Government. While it existed neither the free navigation of the Black Sea nor the safety of Constantinople could be secured. Although the French and ourselves had been practising for fully three weeks making fascines and gabions, thus indicating the possibility of siege operations, neither army possessed a siege-train or any evidence of preparation for a siege. An idea seemed to prevail at home, that the town of Sebastopol was unfortified on the land side, and that it might be captured by a *coup-de-main*. To this hare-brained undertaking did the French and English Governments commit themselves, disregarding the representations both of Marshal Saint-Arnaud and Lord Raglan that the task they were about to undertake was hazardous in the extreme. To disembark a force of 50,000 men upon an almost unknown shore, with no base of operations, no dépôts, no sources of supply save the Fleet, which at any time might be driven out to sea by adverse weather, was an enterprise which violated all the accepted rules of war and strained to the utmost the resolution of our chiefs to face the risk. Yet delays were dangerous. By the middle of September stormy weather is always to be expected in the Black Sea, so the order for immediate embarkation was issued to both armies, and we received the order to return to Varna for that purpose.

It was far from encouraging to watch the slow procession of gaunt skeletons which represented our beautiful Brigade on that return march. Though the distance was only ten miles, and though the men's knapsacks were carried in *arabas* (country carts), three full days were spent on the march to our final camping ground on the summit of the high cliff forming the southern boundary of Varna Bay. Here the sea-breezes and the prospect of active work served to renew our spirits, though cholera still clung to our column. It followed us on board ship; and many a corpse was committed to the deep from the crowded " 'tween decks " of the transports.

Varna, 28th June.—You will have heard of the successful result of the Turkish defence of Silistria. A sortie undertaken at a moment of desperation proves to have been so happily timed that the Russian works, guns and all, were destroyed; and this being followed by the news of the arrival of the allies, has sent the Russians to the right about, and relieved the whole frontier of the Danube. I can imagine that it is not our policy to pursue, as it would never do to cross the river and enter on a campaign in a country like Wallachia, already denuded of all supplies; and yet what can we do? The French are the best fellows to talk to on the subject, and with them I have had several conversations. They are all of opinion that we cannot do anything this year. . . . Varna represents an ant-hill more than anything else, so close are we packed. Had I had time I could have filled a sketch book with caricatures of the absurdities that happen every hour of the day. My tent door looks upon the main gate of the town, where we have a small guard to prevent our soldiers from entering. This unfortunate guard is always on the *qui vive*, as it has to turn out—now to a French General caracoling along

surrounded by aide-de-camps—now to a party of Turkish Infantry *en route* for the war—now to a “plump of spears” or a party of Turkish Lancers, and again to a sober, steady-looking English brigadier riding with a long rein, short stirrups, no straps, and at a walk. Perhaps twice during the day Lord Raglan and Staff will appear, presenting a marvellous contrast to Marshal Saint-Arnaud and his entourage. The latter invariably rides with a vedette of Dragoons in front and an escort of Spahis or Algerian cavalry. These wear nothing but a white turban tied across with a black band, giving it the appearance of a night cap, a white burnous, and a red cloak; otherwise they are guiltless of any garments, so that literally when you see them scamper along on very fiery little steeds you would imagine there had been an alarm of fire in the nearest village, and that the female inhabitants had turned out of bed and, in all the simplicity of their night gear, jumped on the first horse they could find.

. . . The French officers tell me that Canrobert keeps them at drill three hours in the morning and three in the afternoon in order, if possible, to prevent their passing down to our camp. . . . Lord Cardigan is patrolling with five English squadrons and a Turkish cavalry regiment in the neighbourhood of Silistria. They say he is very quiet and attentive, and that he explains his wishes and gives his orders most clearly. Undoubtedly the cavalry have the hardest work at present.

Camp, Aladyn, 13th July.— . . . Our life is not an idle one. . . . Our royal chief is far too fond of field days, and keeps us out five hours under arms so that we return pretty well knocked up while the day is yet young. I fear this hard work will draw our fine English men rather too fine. It is already beginning to tell on their weight which has visibly diminished. . . .

We are forbidden to wear plain clothes, but are allowed

to take liberties with our uniforms, so each adopts a costume most to his taste, taking care to combine a blue coat, sword, and forage cap. . . . We have been trying on the moustache agitation.* The Duke of Cambridge expressed his entire sympathy with the movement, so we all set to work, and in about three weeks we were curling and twisting away at the ends of our beards, until the men thought fit to follow our example. The question was then naturally asked, What are we to do? Bentinck decided hastily—"Shave," so away went the half grown ornaments amidst groans and lamentations. It turns out now, however, that Lord Raglan has no great objection, and that no notice will be taken either way; so now we are beginning again, and in about three weeks the Brigade will appear under a new face.

I am not quite easy about the effects of this climate on our huge men. There is much difficulty in getting enough for them to eat, and the heat is so very great that they are not half the size they were. It is true they could afford to spare a little, but I fear they will become like greyhounds. Prince Edward has just been with me, and he has lost 30 lb. since he left England, 10 lb. since he has been here. We little men, you see, have the pull.

17th— . . . We are all now growing beards against each other, and soon the 3rd battalion Grenadier Guards will look like a legion of *Sapeurs*. I think our appearance would rather astonish you. Pipeclay and blacking have been long ago discarded for the best of all possible reasons—there is none. Belts, pouches, etc., are of a very dusky colour, while the redcoats, from constant exposure to wet and mud, are of a rich purple colour. The bearskins alone retain their pristine gloss, and are in every respect

* Moustaches at this time were only worn by the cavalry. The regulation for infantry prescribed a clean shave of everything below a line drawn from the corner of the mouth to the lower part of the ear.

excellent; we never have a case of *coup-de-soleil*, and all I wish is that they should be further reduced in height about two inches. We cover our shoes with grease like a gamekeeper's, and our arms are the only bright things we have; but I assure you our appearance is very soldierlike, notwithstanding the men have already acquired a rough and ready look that, in a country like this, is far more to the purpose than the neat and glossy dandyism peculiar to the Brigade in London.

9th August.— . . . Cholera and fever have visited our army most severely. I am in great hopes that the plague is at last stayed, as far as cholera goes, for we have not had a case now for three days. My battalion has now lost twenty-five men of this disorder, and we have about fifty ill of low fever, but that is all. The Brigade has lost about sixty men in all: some of the other Divisions have suffered far worse, and as far as the French are concerned their army is more than decimated. Saint-Arnaud chose to steal a march as he thought on Lord Raglan, and, without acquainting the latter, sent a large force under Canrobert into the Dobrudska, in hopes of cutting off the Russians without our assistance; this force has just returned after a three weeks' expedition, minus 7000 men who have fallen victims to cholera and malarial fever! The French are open-mouthed in their abuse of their chief, and I much doubt whether they will ever show a good front this year. Altogether up to this time our campaign has not prospered; we have a number of officers in our army sick, and, as you will see by the papers, one or two are "gone to that bourne," etc.

. . . The authorities (*entre nous*) are so very imprudent in making our men do fatigues in this awful sun, that I will not answer for our gallant and right-hearted Battalion having more than 700 effective to show when we are called upon. In the meanwhile, thank God, I keep my

health surprisingly, and do not suffer much from the heat. My appetite never fails, and I believe that is the secret ; for if you can eat ration beef with the thermometer at 100 you cannot be very ill !

12th.— . . . Since my last (the 9th) our battalion has not been revisited by the pestilence, but, on the contrary, has decidedly been improving in general health. I wish I could say the same of all the others ; but they have latterly been suffering as much as we did at first, and it quite reminds one of the touch of the destroying angel passing in succession over each devoted head. The Coldstream lost ten men in twenty-four hours yesterday, and the Fusiliers, who are within thirty yards of us, had seven men seized last night, but four of these are, they tell me, doing well. . . .

. . . One of the officers of Zouaves who had returned with Canrobert's expedition from the Dobrudska, told one of their brother officers that out of their paper strength of 8000 they had lost 3000. This, for that small expedition alone, independent of the daily increasing number among the regiments of the main body encamped in and around Varna ! . . . The night before last some scoundrels, supposed to be Greeks, set fire to the French and English commissariat stores at Varna. The conflagration was tremendous, and the troops within reach were of course on the spot immediately. All the stores of rice, barley, etc., are, I believe, entirely destroyed, and the powder magazine had a narrow escape. Lord Raglan was away at the Fleet at the time. In the meanwhile preparations for embarkation go on rapidly, and I cannot believe but that it is still intended to strike a blow somewhere. The secret is, however, known only to the two Generals, so we content ourselves with speculating. Many are still very keen upon the great game, and look upon Sebastopol as a certainty. . . .

Camp, Galata, 18th August.—As the Division and Brigade orders for the last three days have begun thus—“The first bugle will sound at 4 a.m., the second at 4.30, when tents will be struck, and the third at five,” you may imagine that the time for writing letters, etc., has been limited and irregular; so I cannot tell you more than that we have accomplished our three days’ march with much success on the whole, and that the sick have not suffered from the effects of the journey. Lord Raglan insisted on the knapsacks of the men being carried for them, and perhaps he has been proved to be right, for I do not think we should have succeeded in mounting this high hill yesterday had it not been for this assistance. Our position is now high and airy, but the want of water is much felt and great economy is necessary.

23rd.—I have been chiefly employed the last four days in making preparations for embarkation and getting everything cut and dried for the event. Varna Bay displays a very forest of masts: not less than 300 vessels are lying there, and at least 150 more are expected. We have established our landing piers and pontoon rafts on the southern side, the French being on the northern side of the bay, so no confusion of troops or tongues need arise. They are now embarking artillery.

You will have heard of poor Trevelyan* of the Coldstream. His death was fearfully sudden. The evening before, I was laughing and talking with him; he being in apparently perfect health. Certainly cholera is a terrible thing!

I saw Lord Raglan the day before yesterday at his own home, he looks very well but anxious. Tom Steele† said

* Capt. and Lieut.-Col. Walter Trevelyan, grandson of Sir John Trevelyan of Nettlecombe, Somerset.

† Military Secretary to Lord Raglan; afterwards Sir Thomas Steele, Commander-in-Chief in Ireland.

he never was better, and his looks would argue so, for I never saw him appear to greater advantage. Varna since the fire is the most wretched looking place I ever saw. To improve matters while I was there, a thunderstorm broke over the town and rain fell in a deluge such as those only can understand who have been in this country. My horse stood up to his knees in less than no time; while wretched bullock carts full of stores, Frenchmen swearing, Turks smoking, and Englishmen shouting, made up a Babel on the top of chaos, to use an imperfect simile.

24th.— . . . Our sickness, thank God, has been diminishing daily, and the convalescents are rapidly regaining strength since we moved to this camping ground, which looks eastwards upon the sea. Their spirits are rising in proportion, and the men are full of fighting. I do not think our French allies are quite so hot on the matter as we are. They seem to think the war is over, now the Turks are at Bucharest and the Russians t'other side of the Pruth.

27th.— . . . Sir John Burgoyne arrived yesterday, and his presence just now is important, for the *génie* sadly needed a head, and even an antiquated one like his will be better than that which has hitherto directed the "brain" department of the army. Saint-Arnaud's address to his soldiers is out, but I have not as yet seen it. . . . I hear he talks of the triple flag waving in three weeks' time on the towers of Sebastopol! I pass my time chiefly on the road between Varna and the camp, or else prowling round the tents and hospitals: then towards the afternoon I mount a baggage pony with a halter round his neck and rattle off to the sea beach, where self and pony indulge in a swim in the briny—the most pleasurable moment perhaps during the day. The "plague," for I can call it by no other name, has not yet left us, and scarce a day

passes without the death of one of our poor fellows being registered. To-day for the first time for a week we have had none, and God grant it may be stayed! Typhus and low fever are still prevalent, and officers as well as men suffer, but not to so great an extent. Strange to say my health improves daily, and I have every reason to be thankful that, while all my friends one after another are laid up, I have been spared even a twinge. That unfortunate regiment the 5th Dragoon Guards is in such a state, owing to their losses of both officers and men by cholera, that they are to be incorporated with the 4th Dragoon Guards until they can be thoroughly reorganized.

I have got Macintosh's book about Turkey and the Crimea. If *he* is right about Sebastopol *we* are all wrong; for we all imagine it is to be attacked on the N.W. side, and that Fort Constantine will be the point we are to make for. Still his book is very interesting. I do not agree with you that the Crimea will under any circumstances be our winter quarters: *à quoi bon* the occupation of it? We do not want to give it back to the Sultan, who never could hold it: the destruction of fleet, arsenal, and dockyard will be a hard hit enough, and then, I fancy, Scutari will be our destination.

The newspapers are of course a great source of interest: I roar occasionally over "our own Correspondent's" letters, which are as absurd in their description of, and strictures on, military matters as they are accurate and clever on scenery and the mode of life and travel.*

9 o'clock p.m.—We have just got the order to embark to-morrow at 7 a.m. in the *Simoom*.

Our transport was an old auxiliary screw man-of-war, whose guns had been removed. Ours was the first Brigade

* It will be remembered that this was the first occasion when the press was allowed to send a correspondent to accompany an army on active service.

to embark, and we found ourselves packed—1800 souls—on board a ship not in any way constructed for the conveyance of troops. It soon became evident that we were too crowded, and 200 were removed to another vessel; yet even 1100 was far too large a number. Owing to the delays, unavoidable perhaps, but most weariful, we were seventeen days on board, out of which only three were required to traverse the Black Sea and reach our destination, whatever it might be, on the opposite coast. Fresh provisions failed us altogether; during the last five days of our voyage nothing but salt pork and biscuit formed the daily ration of all on board. Yet the novelty of the scene and the prospect of adventure acted favourably upon the men's spirits and physical condition.

Truly the scene almost passed description. More than three hundred and fifty vessels composed the invading fleet. Guarded on the right flank by Admiral Dundas's squadron, the unarmed transports ploughed their way without apprehension, some under their own steam, others towed. The *Agamemnon*, flagship of the Vice-Admiral, Sir Edmund Lyons, moved to and fro through the ranks, whipping up the sluggards and securing the general cohesion of this huge armada, until we sighted the low shores of the Crimea, behind which a range of mountains, apparently some 50 miles off, was visible. A safe anchorage was found at no great distance from the shore, to the south of the small port of Eupatoria, of which possession was immediately secured without any resistance, preparatory to our landing which was deferred until next day. That evening we received most ill-advised, but peremptory, orders from our

Commander-in-Chief that the men's knapsacks were to be left on board ship, and that the blanket, issued to every man, was to be substituted for the pack hitherto carried, which contained his small, but necessary, kit. It was too late to remonstrate; but we discovered afterwards that the medical staff, in the hope of lessening the men's burdens, had recommended this course, without consulting the officers commanding regiments. Much of our subsequent suffering may be attributed to this alteration in our equipment; which, however well-intentioned, betrayed absolute ignorance of the loss and inconvenience it entailed. The knapsacks left behind on board ship were not recovered for many weeks, and when restored were found mostly empty; in many cases the men's small account books and hold-alls having been lost or removed. To form a roll or pack out of a heavy blanket on the top of which great coat and mess-tin was to be placed was no easy achievement, and as on the line of march, it soon sunk heavily from his shoulder to the small of his back, the British guardsman cursed deeply the authors of this new contrivance.

H.M. "*Simoom*," *Varna Bay*.

2nd September.—The embarkation has been very well conducted on the whole, and on an average 7000 to 8000 men have been put on board daily. Yesterday 800 horses of the Light Cavalry were embarked and, considering that the transports are mostly more than a quarter of a mile from the piers, this is very fair work. We are, or rather were, very much crowded, our whole battalion and a wing of the Coldstream being on board; but Admiral Lyons relieved us of 200 men of the latter Regiment and put them on board the *Vengeance* so now we are only 1400 souls, crew and all, on board! The men are picking up,

I think, and their spirits are excellent, but oh! what a falling off in flesh and sinew! The Fusiliers are on board the *Kangaroo*, and the rest of the Coldstream in the *Tonning*, a steamer which carries the Staff of the division. . . . We are to land with no baggage, but three days' cooked provisions in our haversacks. I think the first night's bivouac will be a queer affair; I shall pack my valise with all kinds of things, but then you know as a mounted officer I have a pull in being able to stuff valise and holsters with all sorts of useful things: among others I shall not forget the "portable soup."

To touch just once more on a disagreeable subject—I can really assure you that, from pretty severe experience in cholera, I am certain that no earthly remedies are of any avail. The surgeons push as much calomel and opium down the poor fellows' throats as they can but to no purpose. It is the most frightful thing to witness, but in no way contagious. . . .

. . . You will no doubt see in the papers all the plans of our landing, so I need not describe the programme. We all regret one thing, and that is that the First Division does not land first. We started first, and ought to have kept the lead, but the soi-disant Light Division is to pave the way. Codrington* has got Airey's brigade, a great coup for him. I trust the latter will set hard to work at the Quarter-Master-General's Department, for hitherto it has been sadly deficient in brains and system. We all thought Torrens was to have it.

The captain of this ship lately commanded the *Fury* and was "posted" in the *Simoom*. You will of course have read of "Tatham of the *Fury*," he is a regular fire

* Major-General [Sir] William Codrington, commanding 1st Brigade of the Light Division (7th, 23rd, and 33rd Foot). After Inkerman, commanded the 4th Division, and in 1855 succeeded Simpson as Commander-in-Chief. Died in 1884.

eater and has told me a great deal about the coast of the Crimea. I'll engage he won't be the last to arrive. . . .

“*Simoom*,” *Black Sea*.

9th.—My last merely informed you that we were to start the following morning at daylight for the Crimea. Well, at five our anchor was up and our steam fizzing away impatiently, but it was half-past six before the signal was given to take up our respective stations. . . . Then the scene did indeed become glorious! Away went countless steamers searching for their “tows” like passengers for their carpet bags and, having found them, proceeded to “tie the knot” and puff leisurely to the rank to which their division was told off. The transports, which, as you know, are some of the largest and finest of our commercial fleet,* seemed almost to disdain the aid of the “fire engine,” and showed symptoms of anxiety for a separation from the tow rope, thinking, no doubt, that the breeze, which was fair from the south-west, would be sufficient to keep them in their respective places. But Admiral Lyons was inflexible, and the huge *Agamemnon* went doubling in and out among the smaller fry, whipping up one and shoving back another, till the line was formed. Then—bang went a gun from the *Britannia*; down tumbled the white sails of the line of battle ships, and in ten minutes the Bay was tenantless. The French squadron in the meanwhile formed outside ours, and in numbers exceeded the English: but *all* the transports they employ would go inside ten of ours, as they are merely little wretched Mediterranean craft, badly rigged and scarcely seaworthy. The *Napoleon*, which is the crack French “screw” out here, took five of these little tubs in tow, and, like an old hen, led all the other steamers, which took the remainder of the family by fours and fives, and followed in a long

* All sailing-vessels.

line on our outer or east flank ; while outside them again the French liners moved along under sail. Our line of battle ships kept the left flank, and occasionally detached a frigate or a little tender (steam) to rebuke some erratic transport. The weather was lovely and the sea smooth (a great blessing) ! As we settled down to our course and the Fleet became more concentrated, nothing could exceed the magnificence of the scene. About three hundred sail were slowly and steadily moving on in battle order, occupying a square of perhaps twelve miles, and including in their numbers the very finest ships that the world ever saw. . . . The pace was slow, decidedly slow, but of course the hares had to wait for the tortoises ; so by nightfall we had not made more than thirty miles.

11th.— . . . Sunday at sea ! Both in rule and practice a day of rest, for we are at anchor still in a perfect calm. Though out of sight of land the seaweed and the birds prove that we are not many miles off, and part of the amusements of the afternoon consisted in watching the drowning struggles of an unfortunate young woodcock which had fallen exhausted in its flight into the sea before it could reach the ship. One of the sick horses having shown symptoms of relapse was “ pistoled ” and committed to the deep, the other is all right again.

We are supposed to be waiting for the return of the *Agamemnon* and *Caradoc*, which are gone to reconnoitre the coast, having Lord Raglan, Sir G. Brown, and Sir John Burgoyne on board ; they will, I suppose, decide on the point we are to make for, and then we shall sweep down with our armada and push on as hard as we can. Willy Colville * came and paid me a visit this afternoon. He is very well and is on board the *Talavera* (a horse transport) with Artillery ; they have detached the

* Afterwards Sir William Colville, K.C.V.O. Brother of the tenth Baron and first Viscount Colville. Died in 1908.

Rifles all through the Fleet. Cholera still lingers, and some of the ships appear to have suffered severely even in our short voyage. The Fusiliers have lost seven men on board the *Kangaroo*, and the 33rd have lost ten men. We lost one the day we embarked, but none since, and our only cholera patient is recovering. The weather is fortunately very cool to-day and the ventilation of the ship very good. But a cry of horror is heard, for our mess committee has just revealed that all our fresh provisions are exhausted, and that for the remainder of the voyage salt junk and plum "dough" will form our only food : this for the gourmands is an agreeable look-out. For my part I begin to find that I can eat anything ; and, after all, salt pork and pease pudding are not such bad substitutes for the ration beef we had while on shore.

8 p.m.—We sighted the Crimea at sunset, the *Agamemnon* being the first to make the signal of "Land ahead." This being the case, and this land proving to be the most western cape of the Crimea, Cape Tarkan, we calculate on being off our landing place by daylight to-morrow. I shall, I hope, just have time to add a line to say that we are positively going ashore, but probably no more than that. So now farewell ! Come what will, we are prepared, and thank God that, with the exception of thoughts of you all, I was never more in a quiet mind than I now am. That He may watch over you all as I feel He does me at this moment, is the earnest prayer of

Your ever affectionate son,

GEORGE W. HIGGINSON.

Tuesday, 12th. 12 o'clock.—A squally night appears to have dispersed some of our transports ; for here we are still on board, and I can see the smoke of distant steamers apparently towing up stragglers.

We have had two tremendous hailstorms this morning :

the stones were as large as hazelnuts and they lay like snow on the deck! We have had a great laugh over our rations of "three days' salt pork" which were served out this morning: about as much as would satisfy an ordinary labourer for his luncheon! I have, however, plenty of chocolate, arrowroot, and brandy, besides biscuit, so I am quite satisfied.

13th. 3 p.m.—We are now anchoring within a mile of Eupatoria, but what on earth we are to do with this peaceful village I cannot understand. The whole Fleet, French and English, is close up, and I can only suppose that we shall land here and establish a base. This operation, considering that there is not a soldier or a gun to be seen for miles, does not appear to be difficult; but in what way it can affect Sebastopol I confess I cannot see. The weather is glorious, and the scene as you look seawards is intensely grand. About three hundred sail in sight.

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CHAPTER VIII

BATTLE OF THE ALMA

20th September, 1854

On the morning of 14th September, the signal to disembark was flown from Lord Raglan's ship, the *Caradoc*, and at eleven o'clock boats, barges, and floats, were alongside. In silence, though with eager expectancy, the whole force made for the shore. Three days' rations of salt pork and biscuit had been issued to all ranks—officers and men—previous to disembarkation, as no commissariat transport could be provided, nor indeed any transport, save for ammunition. It was not until we stood on the shore, formed up and awaiting orders, that we realized that each officer carried the whole of his worldly goods on his own shoulders. The sensation, doubtless, was a novel one, especially for those of our captains who had served twenty years in the regiment, and were accordingly past the age when one is indifferent to comfort. Each one had a bearskin cap, double-breasted coatee with heavy epaulettes on the shoulder, a cloak *en écharpe*, haversack, with three days' provision, and flask on his right hip, his sword, his only weapon, on his left, without a change of raiment likely to be forthcoming. I myself was singularly unfortunate. My horse, one of the four which embarked with us, was being lowered in the slings from the mainyard into the barge. As it neared

the boat, the retaining rope of the sling was loosened too soon; the poor animal turned round in the air and, as it fell, one of the thole-pins drove a serious wound into the exact spot in its back where the pommel of the saddle would rest. A careful examination on our arrival on shore revealed the impossibility of my attempting to ride my charger, and I naturally looked forward with bitter anxiety to the possibility of our being immediately engaged, while I should no longer be able to occupy my proper place. But for the moment my anxiety was allayed; as our enemy, a few Cossacks, had at once retired, and our bivouac was undisturbed. With regard to my favourite horse, I need only say, briefly, that the good little mare by dint of salt-water bandages, recovered with extraordinary rapidity, so that within four days I was able to get on her back; but in my despair, on the evening of our landing, I walked to the outposts, which I found under the command of Major Norcott of the Rifle Brigade, a personal friend. He had had orders to seize all cattle and horses he could lay hold of, and, when he learnt my serious predicament, allowed me to appropriate a shaggy country Tartar pony, about 12 hands high, which I led back to camp, determined that under any circumstances I would be a mounted officer. On my way I overtook a marauder driving a couple of sheep; he was glad to accept five shillings for them, and I walked triumphantly into camp with as much fresh mutton as my sheep would furnish, a contribution to our larder which was heartily welcomed. Within half-an-hour, assisted by some rice and condiments brought from the ship, the company cooking-pots were hard at work, and

I got my tiny allowance of fresh meat for the first time for a week.

All this occurred on the 14th September. Though the sea had been fairly calm when we disembarked, it came on to blow that night, and the landing of the guns next day was not unattended with difficulty. It was not until the 17th that we advanced to the Bulganak rivulet, where our first skirmish, in which the cavalry and artillery alone were engaged, took place, with slight loss on our side.

Bivouac, Lake Toulza, Crimea.

16th Sept., 1854 . . . We are now *à la belle étoile* on some ridges of heath and brushwood about three miles from the shore, and muster about 50,000 men. The Russians, they say, are in force at two rivers which we shall have to cross, but I do not believe their numbers are near equal to ours; so we shall double them up, no doubt, with ease! . . . This is the third day of the three days' provisions, and the salt pork is beginning to look rather shy! . . .

There is not a tree to be seen, so fires are a difficult matter, but the heather or broom makes a good bed, and if it would only continue fine weather we should do very well; but the first night it poured most gloriously, and we woke up in the morning as wet as if we had had a dip in the sea. . . . To-day they talk of getting up some tents, so we have probably seen the worst. To-morrow we shall advance about eight or ten miles to a place where they say 8000 Russians are, called Bulganak. We have taken a few prisoners and a lot of carts laden with provisions for Sebastopol, besides a caravan of dromedaries; so, as corn seems plentiful, I do not see why we should not do very well. The French, as usual, plunder and pillage on

all sides, and some of the Zouaves have in consequence been cut off by the Cossacks, who hover about but fear to come near our outposts.

Our position here is only assailable in front, as the sea is in rear, and two lakes form the two flanks. We are about fifteen miles from Eupatoria and thirty-six miles from Sebastopol. How on earth the Russians could have been such fools as to allow us to land without any opposition I cannot understand. A few guns might have done a world of damage, particularly while our artillery was disembarking. . . .

18th.— . . . We are certainly not hurrying ourselves, for here we still are in the same place that we occupied on landing. I believe the reason to be that the Generals, finding no opposition of any kind worth speaking of, have determined not to advance until the army is tolerably complete in commissariat arrangements. We have been fairly successful in getting carts and horses, and I think that the ammunition and necessary stores are well provided for. The Duke of Cambridge was in our camp last night, and said he had heard that between 50,000 and 60,000 men was all that the Russians had in the Crimea, and that many of these were Poles whom they were obliged to keep within the walls of Sebastopol, as they were disaffected, and would very likely come over to us.

The night before last, just as we were in our first sleep, there was an alarm of "Cossacks," so out we all tumbled, and in less than ten minutes the battalion, in fact the whole army, was under arms and in quarter-distance column. The alarm proved a false one, originating with the French, but perhaps it was of some use, as it made our fellows very sharp, and now they sleep with one eye open.

On the 19th we bivouacked within sight of the high

land which forms the left or southern bank of the Alma river. Meanwhile the fleet of transports had returned to Varna to bring those who had been unavoidably left behind. The warships steamed slowly along the coast, prepared to take part in any encounter which would bring the enemy within reach of their guns. It is essential that I should note here that our allies claimed to occupy the right of the line of operations. Their landing supplies from the Fleet were thus greatly facilitated, their left flank being fully protected by our army which was aligned with it, at right angles from the shore. To obtain our supplies, and to secure conveyance of sick by litter to the shore, more than three miles had to be traversed. Moreover the left flank of the British Army was absolutely *en l'air*, exposed at any moment to a flank attack from an enterprising enemy. It is true that our cavalry, amounting to about 700 sabres, represented the entire force of that arm, the French having none. It had been foreseen that had we been attacked with vigour on our extreme left, and our forward movement to the Alma river checked, it would have become necessary for the entire force to wheel back, pivoting on its right, till the line became parallel to the shore; when, with the Fleet as a support and rallying point, it would be in a secure position.

But the Russians apparently lacked enterprise of any kind; well protected by a long *épaulement* or breast-work, from which guns of heavy calibre had been carefully trained upon the bridge and fords of the river, besides commanding the only road that passed through the village which we should have to traverse before reaching the river, they believed that they could resist for at least

three weeks any attack which the combined armies might undertake. A fairly numerous body of cavalry, chiefly Cossacks, showed themselves at a respectful distance, but never offered to engage closely our well-mounted and formidable squadrons which, under Lord Cardigan, covered our advance.

The allied armies were nearly even in strength, our own numbers—about 25,000 to 26,000—slightly exceeded the French, and the whole were suffering more or less from the enervating effects of cholera, which, notwithstanding the change of scene, still clung to us. However, the sun shone brightly on the morning of the 20th and a distant view of the enemy chased the depression which had so long damped the spirits of both armies. Advancing in one contiguous line for about five miles over the undulating grass land, the combined force halted on reaching the head of the gentle curve which marks the descent to the river. Here we watched our allies; their right wing rapidly advanced to the attack of a high cliff dominating the mouth of the river. In front of our division, sheltered for the moment by the vineyards and small enclosures between us and the river, lay the Light Division under its veteran chief, Sir George Brown,* impatiently awaiting the order to advance.

At length the batteries in the breast-work already referred to opened fire, and as some of the eighteen-pounder round shot reached even to the high ground on which our division stood, the Guards and Highlanders

* Sir George had served under Moore and Wellington in the Peninsula. The *Times* war correspondent condemned him for his strictness in "pipe-claying, close-shaving, and tight-stockings." He died in 1865, aged 75.

were deployed into line, and we were ordered to fall back about a hundred yards into a less exposed position. My poor little mare, as aforesaid, had come to time in the most marvellous manner from her recent wound, still only half-healed; but as I cantered off to mark the "distant point" (which in those days was the adjutant's duty on deployment), she began, for some unexplained reason, to kick at every stride in the most violent manner, neither caresses nor language having any effect upon her. As I halted at the prescribed distance, I looked down to see if there was anything wrong with the somewhat cumbrous equipment of my saddle. A haversack containing my rations of pork and biscuit hung from the cantle, and I found that my servant, before leaving the ship, had, without my knowledge, put a three-pronged fork into what was, after all, nothing better than a canvas bag. No sooner did my steady charger spring from a walk to a gallop, than the three prongs began to act most vigorously as a spur, every stride sending them with increased force into her ribs. The excitement of my favourite "Squirrel" going into action for the first time was thus accounted for.

Even in our new position some half-spent round shot now and then found a victim, and I looked with considerable interest at the countenances of our men as a gunner belonging to a battery formed up on our right flank, struck full on the head by an eighteen-pounder shot, fell lifeless from the limber. I could trace in their expression at first astonishment, followed by one of sternest resolution.

I have no intention to describe more than what fell absolutely under my own notice, for the story of the battle

of the Alma has been written and rewritten. Military readers are familiar with every detail, the general reader is content with the knowledge that it was a brilliant victory; my narrative does not profess to describe the movements of any regiment or corps except my own; for no one recognizes more fully than I do the difficulties experienced by the writers on military operations.

The gallant and impetuous advance of the Light Division appeared to my observant chief, Colonel Hood, to lose much of its concentrated power owing to the disorder into which the men unavoidably fell in clambering up the steep and rugged bank of the river before advancing on the Russian *épaulement*. When they reached it, they had lost all formation, and had to retire when the Russians re-occupied the entrenchment and renewed the fire with double force. Checked, but in no way defeated, the Light Division regained such shelter as was possible; we received the order to move to their support and relieve the tension to which they were exposed. The Duke ordered an immediate advance of the Division in line. The movement on our right was hampered by our having to cross a vineyard and avoid the conflagration in which the village was now enveloped, having been set on fire by the Russians.

We reached the river bank without serious loss, but we found the centre of the bridge broken, and the men could only cross in file over a plank hastily thrown by the Engineers. I forded a little further up, the river being about twenty yards broad, greatly varying in depth. While engaged in forming our line under the shelter of the bank, Colonel Hood beckoned to me from the centre

of the battalion and said, "Hamilton * has lost his horse ; you will therefore ride on the right of the line ; and mind ! it will be *at your peril* if you take an order from any one so long as you see me sitting on this horse." He then proceeded to align the companies, as carefully as the shelter of the bank would admit ; the line being complete and under control, he then gave the order to advance, which was passed rapidly by each captain. As we reached the summit of the bank we came under a withering fire which, although fortunately it was aimed far too high, would have been sufficient to arrest the progress of men long familiar with the sound of shot, shell and musketry. Encouraged, no doubt, by the check they had effected on the advance of the Light Division, the Russians had formed a line in advance of their breast-work, and were thus able to resist our attack with vigour ; but after a volley from the front rank, our Grenadiers began their slow and steady advance, the rear rank firing while the front rank loaded. For it must be borne in mind that we still lived in muzzle-loading days, and that the ramrod and percussion-cap could not be handled with the rapidity of a magazine rifle. Before long the advance line of the enemy began to fall back on their breast-work, a movement which encouraged us to press forward as rapidly as we could without losing our compact formation.

It was at this moment, as I was riding on the right of the line, watching my chief in the centre, that Arthur Hardinge,† one of Lord Raglan's aides-de-camp, cantered

* Senior major of the Grenadier Guards.

† Second son of the first Viscount Hardinge. Afterwards K.C.B. and General. Died in 1892.

up and said, "Lord Raglan wishes you to throw forward your right, and, if possible, take the breast-work in flank." I replied, "There is my chief in the centre; you must take the order to him." "All right," said he, "I've given the order to you, and that is quite enough," and rode off.

I felt already in a difficulty, remembering my chief's last words; so on we went as before, when up rides the adjutant-general of the army, General Estcourt,* who, in the quiet, calm manner which was his special characteristic, pointed out that we were already out-flanking the Russian left, and suggested the same movement. I then endeavoured to explain the stern and definite order given me by my colonel. He laughingly observed, "Please remember you have the order from the Commander-in-Chief."

Happily I was relieved from my difficulty, for the two right companies found out almost by intuition that they were enveloping the Russian left, and gradually wheeled up in the required formation during their advance.

It was here that I came upon Sir George Brown, sitting on his grey horse absolutely indifferent to the hail of musketry which filled the air, and watching the relief and support which we were giving to the detached fragments of his—the Light—Division. In a loud, encouraging tone he exclaimed, "Go on! Press on! The day is yours!"

Halting for a moment by his side, I noticed a heavy column of the enemy moving rapidly down to reinforce the

* Died of cholera before Sebastopol in June, 1855. He and General Airey were unfairly blamed by the Press for the suffering of our troops in the trenches (see Kinglake's "Invasion of the Crimea," vol. vi., pp. 312, 342).

hesitating troops defending the breast-work, and pointed out our danger to the general, for the fold of the ground prevented our men from seeing the threatening danger. The general replied, "Don't you get excited, young man. I tell you the day is yours ; press on !" Sir George, being short of sight, had not seen the approaching column. Our apprehension, however, was speedily relieved, for Turner's troop of Horse Artillery galloped up on our right, wheeled half-left, and, with their accustomed speed and accuracy, threw shot and shell into the advancing columns. I could see the Russian commanding officers waving their swords and encouraging their men, but to no purpose, the columns turned and fled.

Meanwhile our line advanced with firm and impressive regularity until it came within fifty yards of the breast-work. The word "Charge !" rang out ; the line broke into a run, and, bounding over the parapet, our Grenadiers flung themselves on the few Russians remaining inside. The guns had already been removed by the Russians ; only one was left for a trophy. Our ranks were re-formed, under the stern orders of our colonel, and in a few minutes we stood again in column, prepared for any further movement or adventure. But it was soon evident that our enemy had had enough ; the army which Prince Mentshikoff had led the Emperor to believe held an impregnable position was in full retreat, after a battle which had lasted less than four hours. The victory was complete. Some of our guns had crossed the ford and plunged shot and shell into the retiring Russians, who were only saved from total annihilation by our want of cavalry to pursue them. As to Pennefather's and Adam's brigades, they did cross

the river, but where they went to Heaven knows. I never saw them till the fight was over.

We had 11 Grenadiers killed, and 4 officers and 171 wounded, our strength on the field before the action being 30 officers and 800 N.C.O.'s and privates.

Whether the pursuit of an enemy so completely demoralized could have been attempted with the small body of cavalry at the disposal of the allies, has always been a subject of dispute; nor do I feel justified even now, being fully aware of all that happened subsequently, in passing any judgment. Neither do I propose to comment on the causes, real or generally accepted, which led to our halting the next day at the Alma, instead of pressing onwards and securing by a *coup-de-main* the Northern Forts which commanded the roadstead, dockyard and arsenal of Sebastopol. Therefore, resuming my narrative, which I still confine to my own personal observation and experience, I return to the narrower limits of what befell us in the rest of this eventful day.

The evening was closing in. Awaiting our final orders, we were soon comparing notes on the adventures each individual had met with. I specially remember that, to the surprise of each of us, we spoke almost in whispers, our lungs, having had such vigorous exercise under the intensity of our excitement that our voices had failed.

We had four officers wounded, but none killed. Our colours were not uncased till the affair was nearly over, so they received only two shots; but those of the Fusiliers were simply riddled.

All of us agreed that no excitement they had ever met with in the whole of their lives had ever equalled that

which they had experienced during the battle. All concurred in their admiration, approaching to reverence, for our chief, who had held his battalion so splendidly under command. While all sense of fatigue had vanished, yet it must be remembered that each officer wore the dress and accoutrements as already described on landing.

At length the order came for us to bivouac for the night, the spot selected for our Brigade being not more than a quarter of a mile off. Here arms were piled and preparations for bivouac rapidly made, as the day was already beginning to close in. My personal work, however, was not ended, for Colonel Hood ordered me to ride back to the further bank of the river to seek for any dead or wounded who had fallen in our advance across the vineyard previous to fording the river.

My errand took me across the battlefield, which presented a scene that not even the sixty years which have since elapsed can obliterate from my memory. As I turned back towards the Russian entrenchment, which was the chief object of our contest, the very atmosphere seemed to be tainted with an inexpressible odour of bloodshed. The unnatural attitude of the dead and the contorted movements of the wounded gave rise to feelings which it needed all one's resolution to control. Almost the first among the dead whom I recognized was poor little Harry Anstruther,* his red coat and shirt thrown back, disclosing the bullet wound which had struck him full on the heart. Only two days before he had found me lying prone on the grass writing a hurried letter to my

* Second son of Sir Ralph Anstruther, of Balcaskie, a lieutenant in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

people at home, and throwing himself down beside me, asked for a slip of paper on which to write a few lines. I have reason to know that the dear little lad expressed in those hurried lines the conviction that he should meet his death in the approaching fight. His elder brother had been invalided home while we were in camp at Varna.

Riding on a little further, I met a litter carried by four bearers of the Scots Fusilier Guards, conveying to the ship for embarkation Frank Haygarth, he looked so pale and exhausted from the fearful wounds he had received that as I bent over him and heard his half-whispered "Good-bye, Hig!" I little thought that for many long years afterwards we should talk over together events of the campaign in which we had shared the opening scene. Before reaching the river bank I met another litter, also carrying to the shore a grievously wounded soldier whom I recognized by the cap which lay upon his prostrate form, as a private in the Guards. As he turned his face towards me I saw his lips move, and in the belief that he had some message to convey to his friends at home, I halted the bearers and bent over my saddle to listen. With a faint attempt at a smile he simply said, "I think, sir, they'll say we did our duty to-day." Nothing more! I signalled to the bearers to proceed, and reflected as I rode forward how much true nobility may lie beneath the rough garb of a private soldier.

I crossed the river and, happily, found few of our men, and they past all help; the wounded having found their way to the field hospitals.

We cannot all be heroes. Constitution, nerve, temperament, what not, comes to each of us by inheritance,

nor is any man left the choice of rejecting the physical bequest of his progenitors. Nevertheless, cowardice may never be condoned, though we cannot but feel sincere pity for the craven *malgré lui*. It is in that spirit that I mention the following incident.

As I rode back towards our bivouac, I caught sight of a fellow in a bearskin cap crouching under the wall of one of the few houses in the village that had escaped the conflagration. I recognized him as one of our men, whom I called by name. He rose to his feet, not without hesitation, but stood firmly enough. I asked him how and where he was wounded. He replied that he had not been actually wounded, but had felt very ill. Of the nature of his illness there was no evidence in his appearance. The man had long been known to me as one whose antecedents were mysterious; he had evidently been well educated, and was often employed in the orderly-room as assistant clerk, but constant irregularities arising from drink had always prevented his obtaining promotion, and he had come to be looked upon by his comrades, as well as those in authority, as a man with a doubtful past. I sternly ordered him to resume his rifle and proceed direct to our place of bivouac, which he would find without difficulty at the summit of the hill, and to report himself to the sergeant-major without delay. I then proceeded further up the river and round through the cavalry camp where, by the way, I discovered that Lord Cardigan had contrived to get a tent pitched for his personal convenience. He was standing at the door of it and made many inquiries of me about our share in the battle, and night had almost fallen before I reached our bivouac.

I dismounted, for the first time since the early morning, from the little mare who had carried me so well, notwithstanding her scarcely healed wound. I found that the skulker had not returned, nor was it till next day that he was seen again. Then a fatigue party, told off to bury the Russian dead within their own entrenchment, found his body in an embrasure, his empty rifle by his side and a bullet wound through his brain. He had evidently died by his own hand, an act, one should suppose, demanding more courage than to charge with his comrades. It may well have been that the poor fellow was overcome with intolerable shame at his own conduct.

As a relief to this mournful episode let me put Private G——'s gallantry on record. While the companies were forming up on the morning before going into action, this man was noticed sitting on his pack, apparently unable to rise and obey the sharp word of command. His captain called my attention to him, I brought the circumstance to the notice of our commanding officer, who went with me to the place where Private G—— was sitting. We saw at once that the cholera had laid hold of him. He was one of the smartest and best conducted men in the battalion, a universal favourite, and it was painful to watch his ineffectual efforts to straighten his limbs which were already stiffening. No vehicle or any means of transport was available, and it was with the deepest feelings of regret that when the order to march off arrived, this poor fellow was left on the ground. His rifle and ammunition were placed by his side, with such additions to the contents of his haversack as could be provided.

Seated on his pack he watched our departure with a

look of despair. As the column advanced, halting from time to time to preserve our alignment with the French, the men used to look round at the drooping figure still visible on the sky-line. But already the heavy firing in our front absorbed our attention, and all thought of poor G—— was dispelled by the excitement of the serious work before us. It was not till the close of the day that I heard the man's story as he told it to his captain, by whose side he sprang, the very first of the rank and file, over the parapet of the Russian entrenchment. He had watched the forward march of his comrades with an ever increasing feeling of despair, until he heard the rattle of musketry, when he felt sure that his own battalion would be in the thick of the fight. The thought enabled him to make a supreme effort; he got on his legs, and at every stride seemed to acquire increased strength. Regaining the ranks almost unnoticed, as they crossed the river, he, as I have already said, was the first man to scale the Russian breastwork. Probably no more splendid proof of the triumph of will and resolution over physical weakness was ever afforded in the story of war.

I have always regretted that I was unable to trace the subsequent career of Private G—— beyond the fact that the cholera again attacked him that night, and that he was removed on board ship with sick and wounded to Scutari. Two years afterwards, however, I was telling the story at Windsor Barracks to men of another battalion, and expressed the fear he must have died, when a voice from the audience exclaimed, "He's all right, sir; I met him the other day in Piccadilly."

Orders had been issued that we were not to advance

on the 21st, and I was not sorry to lie before the bivouac fire and discuss such food as our servants had been able to prepare. I mixed with water my ration of rum in the identical silver cup which had formed part of my father's canteen during the latter part of the campaign in the Peninsula. We heard the *clairons* of the French regiments celebrating their victory at the hour of "retreat." But as to the thoughts that crowded through my brain, it is only now that, sitting in my armchair with ample leisure, no longer under the restraint of that reserve which, in early life, bids a man refrain from expressing those deeper feelings of which, though but half acknowledged, we are conscious, that I dare allude to what passes in the mind of a young soldier on first going into action.

In Bivouac on the Alma.

21st September, 1854.—Being mounted, I could of course see better than most people what we were about, and I believe I am right in saying that the first sensations of all of us as we descended our side of the valley, and shot and shell came hopping among us, were not quite agreeable. The firing soon became general, and at length we were permitted to dash at the river and cross it: up to that time our chief had held us back, much to our annoyance, so we were not disposed to linger when the order did come. . . . I have no time for lengthy details, but I am justified in saying, and I am confident the despatches will bear me out, that the Grenadiers fully kept up their character. Some go so far as to say that we saved the day, for the regiments of the Light Division were broken up when we arrived on the Russian side of the river, and at the end of the action the Duke publicly thanked Hood and the battalion for his judgment and our behaviour. When I looked at our losses I can hardly understand how

I was so mercifully preserved. Neither I nor my horse was touched. Time is so precious that I must be brief, and turn only for a moment to the dark side of the picture. Above all I have to regret the loss of poor Horace Cust,* with whom I had been talking a minute or two before. He was struck by a round shot, which passed through his horse and shattered his leg. Amputation was tried, but he died of the hæmorrhage. I cannot say how attached I was to him! . . .

I can hardly write, for I am so knocked up with hard work that I am half asleep, so forgive my incoherency in telling my story. . . .

P.S.—Remember, I am quite well, only tired, which you will understand when I tell you that I have not taken off my clothes for six days, and other letters have still to be written . . .

Long after the war was over, I was told how the news from the Alma was brought to the Emperor Nicholas, and how he received it. The momentary check of the Light Division during the first attack on the Russian entrenchment appeared to the Russian commander-in-chief to make his victory secure ; so he ordered his aide-de-camp, Captain Greig,† to proceed without a moment's delay to St. Petersburg, announcing by telegraph to the Emperor that he brought good news, and that he would follow as rapidly as possible with the despatches. After the action was over and the Russian army in full flight, a messenger

* Captain in the Coldstream Guards; grandson of the first Lord Brownlow.

† Scottish family names appear in the Army Lists of all the great European Powers, indicating descent from the numerous soldiers of fortune who left Scotland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to seek service abroad.

overtook Captain Greig at the place from which he had telegraphed, and handed him the despatches admitting the defeat, but with no authority for recalling the telegram, although Captain Greig was, of course, informed by the messenger of the final result of the battle. Arriving at the Winter Palace fatigued and dusty by his long journey, and in the same dress in which he had quitted the battle-field, Captain Greig found the whole Court assembled in the great hall, the Emperor standing on the steps of the throne at the upper end. With grave countenance and bent figure Greig passed through the expectant crowd and stood in silence before the Emperor, holding the despatch. Impatient at his silence, the Czar exclaimed, "Well, sir; your good news? Tell us about the victory."

"Alas! Sire, it was a defeat."

Seizing the despatch, the Emperor struck him with great violence across the face with his glove, exclaiming, "You lie, you dog, you lie!"

The great assembly broke up in confusion, and the Emperor gave way to one of his uncontrollable fits of rage, during which the only person who dared approach him was the Empress. Without any apology for the insult publicly offered him, Captain Greig was ordered to return to his post in the Crimea; but his unmerited humiliation was not forgotten by the Empress. Many weeks passed by and the name of Captain Greig appeared in the *Gazette* as "severely wounded" during the siege operations at Sebastopol, and that he had particularly distinguished himself. In the hope that the Czar might render justice to this unfortunate officer, the Empress urged that he

should be restored to favour; but the Emperor remained silent and unmoved.

Again, after many weeks of hard fighting and grievous suffering, Captain Greig was reported to be "wounded and honourably distinguished." The Empress again pleaded his cause. For a long time the Emperor made no reply, but at length summoned the aide-de-camp in waiting, and ordered him to proceed at once to Sebastopol and personally to convey to *Colonel* Greig his congratulations and approval. The *amende* and the promotion, though tardy, were complete.

Bivouac near Balaklava.

27th.— . . . Since I wrote we have been incessantly advancing and, as you will see by the map, have taken the Russians in reverse by moving to the south side of Sebastopol. We halted at the river Katcha on the 23rd, at the river Belbek on the 24th, and on the 25th we made a forced march through an awful jungle to the Tchernaya river, capturing *en route* 200 prisoners and a quantity of baggage and stores. We did not reach our ground till nine o'clock at night, and were much knocked up, none the less so for having had two *alertes* the night before, which effectually disturbed our repose. Yesterday we marched from the Tchernaya to Balaklava, which place surrendered after a few shots had been fired. We have consequently a base of operations established, and this little landlocked harbour is now filled with men-of-war and steamers from our Fleet. This is of great importance, as our sick have accumulated fearfully owing to the fatigue and want of food, and here we can provide for their wants and safety. We are in the highest spirits at our success, and fully expect to enter Sebastopol to-morrow or next day. I suppose we shall have one more fight in order

to complete the thrashing, and then the place will be ours.

The sailors landed last night and took possession of the lighthouse, lighting up the lamp, while others seized the telegraph station. All this is rather surprising, when it is considered how the country we have marched through abounds in strong positions. I could relate to you plenty of anecdotes of our campaigning, had I more time; but what we all want just now is rest and sleep, for the bare ground is not a refreshing couch after a hard day. Our men hold out bravely, and accomplished the forced march with true English pluck; but out of our once brilliant numbers we scarce muster 600 bayonets!

Poor Cox has fallen a victim to the fatigue, and, to our great grief, died this morning. I had persuaded him with great difficulty to let me carry his kit on my horse; it was cruel to expect an officer of his standing to carry on his back everything he had; yet he would persist with indomitable resolution. The exhaustion induced an attack of cholera, and though he was taken on board the *Caradoc* yesterday, it was too late. I thank God that I continue so well myself, and eat my salt pork and biscuit with good appetite. "Squirrel" bears her fatigues like her master, and carries me bravely.

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CHAPTER IX

SIEGE OF SEBASTOPOL

September and October, 1854

I HAVE made but slight allusion to the possible causes of delay in our advance immediately after the battle. At the moment we attributed it to the condition of Maréchal Saint-Arnaud, the French commander-in-chief, which was known to be critical. Reasons of a conflicting nature have since been given; it is enough for me to say that the conveyance of the wounded to the ships and the burial of the dead gave us full occupation; but I obtained leave for a couple of hours to ride down to the seashore and enjoy a swim. We had landed on the 14th September; it was now the 21st; between those two dates I had never had my red coat off my back except to give it a shake, and a bath of some sort became an absolute necessity. Not having a change I washed my under-garments and dried them on the sand. It may not be generally known that the waters of the Black Sea are not nearly so salt as those of the Mediterranean or *Ægean*, which was all in my favour in a first attempt at laundry work.

There were vineyards close to our camping ground in which the grapes were already ripe, and I need hardly say that our men, so long accustomed to the daily ration of salt pork, indulged far too freely in this unlooked-for luxury. In the course of the day the three battalions of

Guards formed up together with those of the Highland Brigade to receive the congratulations of H.R.H. the General of our Division, and a thrill of appreciation stirred all ranks of the Grenadiers as the Duke, addressing Colonel Grosvenor Hood, expressed his admiration for the manner in which the advance of our battalion had been conducted. Of this he had made a special report to the commander-in-chief.

On the day following we advanced to the River Belbek. The route was strewn with accoutrements, helmets, etc., showing that the Russians had been demoralized and in confusion. It was at our bivouac on the 23rd, on the Katcha that, for reasons unknown to the army generally, it was decided not to attack the North Fort, which, as aforesaid, commanded Sebastopol and its harbour. Instead of that, we were to pass, by a flank march, round to the south side of the city, which was said to be absolutely undefended, and to capture and hold the little port of Balaklava as a base of operations. Therefore, on the following morning, we began this remarkable movement; which, as it had to be conducted through an absolutely unknown and in parts thickly-wooded district, and exposed to attack from an enterprising enemy, was hazardous in the extreme. Fortunately our foe was not disposed to be enterprising. Part of the Russian Army had taken refuge in Sebastopol, the remainder continuing their flight to Simpheropol. We captured a small convoy of millet and maize and met with no opposition. Quitting at length the high ground, we descended the steep cliffs known as the Mackenzie Heights, and, reaching at nightfall the grassy plain below, received the order to halt

and bivouac for the night, not far from the Tchernaiâ river. So exhausted were the men by the long march that, when the order was given to "Form column: pile arms," slipping the heavy packs from their shoulders they sank sound asleep beside them, incapable of further effort. We had ascertained that a brigade of the Light Division was in advance of us, and we therefore felt secure from sudden attack. I am confident that no officer or man in the whole army that performed this flank march would not have described it as the most fatiguing day in the whole campaign.

Under arms at daylight, our advance was delayed sufficiently long to enable a hasty breakfast to be prepared; but there were indications that the cholera was still with us, and the *morale* of the battalion was not quickened by the sight of our senior captain, Augustus Cox, being lifted from the ground, his limbs paralysed and features of an ashen grey, absolutely incapacitated from any further exertion. Universally popular, not only with us, but with a large circle of friends at home, he had borne the privations and fatigues of the last ten days with admirable fortitude, though already well advanced in years. A battery of artillery was passing by our flank, and our poor comrade was lifted on to a gun limber after a hasty and sad farewell to us all. He was thus carried in to Balaklava, and died that night on board the *Caradoc*.

And here I do not hesitate to record an illustration of the strength of Colonel Hood's character, which, although to the sentimentalist it may seem heartless, will commend itself to all those who understand the value of stern resolution exercised at a critical moment.

The broad plain of Balaklava being unbroken by cover of any kind, the battalion marched in quarter column, every man being thus more or less under the eye of the commanding officer. Before we were half-way across the plain a man was observed to fall out, and others seemed to hesitate. He was a remarkably fine soldier, a corporal of commanding height and presence, and a universal favourite. The colonel encouraged him with a few kindly words, and he resumed his place, only however to fall out again in less than a quarter-of-an-hour. The colonel's orders to the men to keep their places became stern and peremptory; but before long the corporal again fell from his place, many others following his example, causing confusion in the ranks. Colonel Hood immediately halted the battalion and formed square, the men facing inwards. He ordered me to dismount from my horse and prepare in the usual way for a drumhead court martial, Corporal S—— being charged with "disobedience of orders." The usual formalities were complied with, the surgeon gave his opinion that, although suffering, the man was able to keep his place in the ranks. The charge thus having been proved, the sentence of "guilty" was pronounced, with the consequent deprivation of rank. The corporal's stripes were immediately removed, his rifle taken from him, and he resumed his place in the ranks. The column was reformed, and our destination—a village close to Balaklava—was reached without the loss of a single straggler.

The resolute action of the commanding officer had produced a feeling almost electric among the men, who appeared to recognize to the full the influence of discipline

and authority. I have no hesitation in saying that the prompt action of our chief did more to arrest the progress of the malady and stimulate the men's power of resistance than any remedy which, under this grave emergency, could be provided; yet I record this tragic incident with a grave sense of responsibility, for the poor fellow died the same evening.

This, however, was not the only occurrence that day which showed how strict a disciplinarian our chief was. I myself was to furnish another example. The village in which we found ourselves was prettily situated, composed of scattered cottages and two or three farmhouses, whose occupants must have been of a well-to-do class. They seemed all to have fled in haste; for, on entering one of the more attractive residences, I found a table laid for dinner, the soup still hot, silk gowns hanging on pegs, and so on. I shouted in every language that I knew, but no one responded. Several of our younger officers secured a large cooking kettle and placed all the contents of the larder into it; soon it was on a camp-fire, promising a savoury mess for many hungry men who had not tasted anything that day, save the weak coffee and biscuit of our morning meal before starting. Meanwhile, news arrived that not only had the despatch boat *Caradoc* found its way through the narrow entrance into Balaklava harbour, but that the huge *Agamemnon* itself, the flagship of Sir Edmund Lyons, had been brought in with consummate skill, and was lying close to the wharf. A commandant of the port had been immediately appointed, and we were ordered to furnish two companies as a town-guard. The colonel desired me to make the

necessary arrangements, to see that the two companies were marched off, and that they were supplied with their rations by the commissary, who was already at the port. So, with a lingering look at the steaming kettle, I rode off with Charles Lindsay,* who commanded the two companies in question. As he was my senior officer and had long experience (having previously served as a captain in the 43rd Regiment), I did not presume to interfere more than was absolutely necessary in carrying out the commanding officer's instructions, which were that I was to see the men have their dinners before I returned.

On arriving at the quay we found the *Caradoc* already moored alongside. As Captain Derriman, who commanded it, proved to be an old friend of Charles Lindsay, cordial offers of assistance were given, and it was arranged that our men's dinners should be cooked in the galley of the *Caradoc*. No arrangement could be more satisfactory; wherefore, having seen the raw material or rations issued, I took leave of the party and rode back to camp, a distance perhaps of a mile and a half. On my reporting to my chief—whom I found at the door of a very comfortable hut—that I had “seen the companies arrive, the sentries posted, and the rations issued,” Colonel Hood asked—“Did you see the men have their dinners?” I could only reply that the captain of the *Caradoc* and Lieutenant-Colonel Lindsay were old friends, and that as the former had placed the galley of his despatch boat at the disposal of the troops, I felt sure that by this time the men were thoroughly comfortable. “I ordered you,

* The Hon. Charles Lindsay, third son of twenty-fourth Earl of Crawford. Died in 1899.

sir, to see that the men had their dinners. Go back at once, ascertain if that is the case, and report to me." This order amounted to a rebuke for non-compliance with the strict letter of the previous one. It was overheard by the group of hungry fellows assembled around the kettle, which was now exhaling the most fragrant odour; but 'poor little "Squirrel" and I had to make another trip, and fully an hour passed before I returned with the information that "the town guard had enjoyed an excellent repast and were thoroughly comfortable." I need hardly say that my comrades had reserved a Benjamin's mess for the adjutant who had failed to interpret literally the orders of his chief.

The confident hope expressed in the letter quoted in the last chapter of a speedy entry into Sebastopol soon waned. It became evident that if the place could not be taken by *coup-de-main*, siege operations must be undertaken. The situation was complicated by the illness of Maréchal Saint-Arnaud, his resignation of the command of the French Army on the 25th September, and his death on the 29th. General Canrobert, who succeeded to the command-in-chief, was a most distinguished soldier, with a brilliant record of service in Algeria; but, as events subsequently proved, he lacked that moral courage so essential when a definite, though rapid, decision is needed.

On the 28th September the Second, Third, and Fourth Divisions moved up to the heights above Sebastopol, the Light Division following; while on the 29th the few heavy guns were dragged up on to the heights and placed temporarily in a position of shelter. The Guards and Highlanders remained to cover our base in Balaklava. On the

3rd October we marched to take up a position in reserve to the Second and Light Divisions, at the head of a ravine on the height of Inkerman. De Lacy Evans's Second Division occupied the extreme right, while the French army took up the ground on the extreme left of the British force, their right resting on the left of our army, their left on the sea at the Bay of Kamyesh, where their ships lay at anchor. It will thus be seen that the effects of this countermarch placed the British army again on the exposed flank, seven miles distant from their supplies, while their proximity to the sea afforded not only security to our allies, but easy access to their source of supply.

Bivouac near Balaklava.

29th September.— . . . We had no trouble in taking Balaklava: the garrison was small, and surrendered after a short struggle. Our siege guns are now being landed; I hope to-morrow we shall open our trenches, as the sooner this campaign is ended the better. The days are still hot, but the nights are very cold, and the season too late for bivouacking. Our old enemy the cholera still clings to the camp, and each day demands a fresh victim; I attribute this partly to the fruit which the men gorge. The grapes are all ripe, and certainly are delicious, and the quantity they eat is fearful. I never saw such good vegetables as there are in this country; cabbages and tomatoes are our daily food; they help down the rations very well. The Fleet is in Balaklava harbour, which is an immense advantage, as we ship our sick on board at once, and so get rid of them. However, as I said before, *que cela finisse!* Neither officers or men can much longer stand living in the rough as we are, and this "one shirt and a tooth-brush" system becomes irksome at the end of three weeks. What we are to do when we have

taken the place yet remains to be seen. All I trust is that a winter in this country is not in store for us. The utter demolition of the arsenal, fortress and docks ought to suffice surely.

Our Grenadiers were superbly disciplined, and never flinched from danger, but they proved somewhat slow in acquiring the intelligence which the individual soldier must exercise during night work in the trenches. As an illustration of this I may relate an incident which has impressed itself on my memory through being the last occasion on which I accompanied my gallant chief, Colonel Hood, when he was commanding a covering party* in the trenches of the right attack. On the night in question, nearly all the duty men of the battalion were required for this work, as the parallel under construction needed protection from a possible sortie by the enemy. Having received no specific instructions of any kind as to dress, we paraded in bearskin caps. Guided by an Engineer officer, we arrived just at nightfall, without casualties, though frequently under shell fire, and relieved a similar number in the appointed duty.

Unable to obtain any details as to the points which needed special guarding, Colonel Hood deployed his companies on the exposed flank; but, being aware of the inexperience of our men in the exercise of individual intelligence in night operations, ordered the company officers to keep touch with each other and not lose sight of outlying sentries. All these instructions had to be imparted in a low voice, owing to the short distance

* "Covering parties" are told off to protect "working parties" engaged with pick and shovel in the trenches or in erecting batteries.

between us and the enemy's works. As the colonel received no information from the officer in charge of the working party, he seated himself under the slight protection of a half-finished parapet, bidding me sit down beside him. We sat for a while discussing the need of all ranks for more precise instructions, when suddenly from the exposed face of our trench the dark figure of a soldier sprang over our heads. His voice, however, immediately relieved any apprehensions, his first words being—"I say, when are you going to relieve my sentries out here in front? I hope you'll be quick about it, for our time has been up ever so long, and it's just the hour when the Russians begin their firing." Further explanations were rapidly exchanged, and it turned out that twelve double sentries, extended one hundred yards in front of the parallel under construction, had not been relieved when their main body had marched off.

Colonel Hood immediately ordered me to take twelve files from the company on the right flank of our covering party, and, guided by Captain Churchill, to occupy the positions held by his advanced sentries. It was now dark, and but for the skilful guidance of this officer I should have had much difficulty in finding the ground we were to occupy. Stationing two of our Grenadiers at the spot where we found the right of his line occupied by two kneeling figures, evidently quite ready to quit their somewhat dangerous post, I proceeded along the line, placing files of our men at intervals of about thirty or forty paces as substitutes for those who had been so long in this exposed position. I ordered each file to remain till I returned, when I would give them full instructions, and

that they were to avoid exposure by kneeling, or even lying down. On reaching the last sentries on the left, who were within thirty or forty yards of the covering parties of another division, Churchill bid me a hasty good-bye, his men having already run rapidly to such shelter as they could find on the left flank. Turning from the sentry of my left file, I proceeded back along the line, intending to point out to each sentry as well as I could the nature of his duties. To my horror and surprise my line of sentries had disappeared! It was only when I reached the right of the line that I found them in a solid mass, their bearskin caps towering above the skyline, offering a fair mark to the enemy's guns. I asked why on earth they had quitted their posts in disobedience of orders, and was met by the most earnest entreaty that I would allow them to remain together, for they were prepared to die to the last man if only allowed to stand shoulder to shoulder. In hasty, but subdued language I explained to them the extreme danger of their position, and found that it was quite enough to appeal to them not to make fools of themselves, and I had no difficulty in re-distributing them in their proper places; each man seeming conscious that he had yielded to a momentary panic. Within three weeks these men became as active, as intelligent, and capable of holding single-handed the advanced post of a sentry as could possibly be desired. I only refer to the incident as proving the danger of ordering soldiers, however well prepared to engage an enemy in the light of day, to perform duties at night, isolated from their comrades, on unknown ground and before an unseen foe.

Only a few days later, on the 17th October, the battalion experienced a loss, which, for the moment, seemed to be irreparable. Colonel Hood had been ordered to take command of a large covering party in the trenches, including a strong detachment of the Grenadiers. I went with him as far as the first parallel, when he ordered me to return to camp on a special duty. Within less than two hours a litter was laid at my tent door, by four Grenadiers, which contained the body of my honoured colonel. It appeared that he had just risen from his seat under a parapet to examine with his glass a Russian battery when a grape-shot struck him full on the breast and killed him on the spot. As I lifted his remains in my arms and carried them into his tent all other feelings seemed to be merged in the consciousness that we had lost the man whose firmness and calm leadership were so conspicuous at the battle of the Alma. Though of a reserved nature, he yielded freely at times to a love of friendly intercourse. I had lived on terms of the greatest intimacy with him, and although he treated me in all matters of duty with a sternness approaching severity, his kindly bearing and language while we were enjoying our simple meals together confirmed my early belief that in him I had found a true friend. Had he lived he would, I am confident, have succeeded to very high, if not the highest, command. I trust that, so long as the regiment retains its proud position, the memory of Colonel Grosvenor Hood will always be cherished as one of its noblest chiefs.

The daring exploit of a certain petty-officer in the *St. Jean d'Acre*, Captain Harry Keppel's * ship, deserves to

* Afterwards Admiral-of-the-Fleet, Sir Henry Keppel, G.C.B., O.M.
Died in 1904.

be recorded. Immediately after their defeat on the Alma, the Russians, anticipating an attempt by the allied fleet to force an entrance into Sebastopol harbour, sank several of their ships of war across the mouth. But they kept some of their best ships afloat further up the harbour, where they were nearly out of range of our batteries. The petty-officer aforesaid offered to blow up any one of these ships by means of his own devising, if given a free hand to use a special kind of canoe he had constructed. Being required to explain his purpose, he declared that, if allowed to choose his own time, he would place a bag containing one hundred-weight of explosive powder in such a position against the fore-foot of any ship in the allied fleet as would, when exploded, sink it. He was allowed to try the experiment "in dummy" on the British fleet. Sharp look-out was kept by patrol-boats, despite which there was found at daylight one morning a dummy bag, large enough to hold one hundred-weight of explosive, screwed to the fore-foot of the British admiral's flagship!

It appeared that, clothing himself entirely in white, his canoe also being covered all over with white canvas, this adventurous youth started by night noiselessly from his own ship, unseen except by a confederate, with the bag attached by a cord to a large auger. He then paddled noiselessly through the fleet and, slipping close past the side of the flagship, with two turns of the auger fastened the bag to the fore-foot of the admiral's ship and adjusted what would represent a fuse. It was clear that, if by any means the canoe could be floated from some unseen spot at the upper part of the harbour, a successful attempt

might be made to send the Russian flagship, the *Twelve Apostles*, to the bottom; though the ultimate fate of the daring seaman would be very doubtful. However, no part of our siege-works approached so near to the harbour as to afford a starting point; moreover, as my informant specially told me, neither the Admiral nor Lord Raglan appear to have approved of the proposal, because, as neither the torpedo nor submarine had at that time been invented, it was hardly thought to be "cricket." But the French got wind of the story; and, holding as they did on the extreme right of their *attaque* a few hundred yards at the end of the upper harbour, they asked and obtained leave to make the attempt—our man and his canoe being placed at their disposal. Accompanied by Colonel Foley,* our military attaché on the French Staff, a mixed party of French and English sailors conveyed the canoe to a spot where, being carefully concealed by the weeds growing by the bank, our gallant adventurer might embark unseen on his perilous enterprise. As his voyage was necessarily that of an explorer and the night very dark there was much misgiving as to the probable results which demanded so much caution, and it was arranged that some of the party should remain till long after daylight to assist in effecting his return, whether the expedition were successful or not. All being duly prepared the brave fellow pushed his way through the weeds in his canoe and was soon lost to sight. Hour after hour passed, no explosion was heard, nor, as the day began to dawn, did any of the vessels of the Russian fleet appear to have

* The Hon. St. George Foley, third son of third Lord Foley. Afterwards General and K.C.B. Died in 1897,

been disturbed. Waiting till broad daylight, the party returned to headquarters, convinced that their gallant comrade had either been captured or met with a fatal end.

Late in the evening of the same day the French sentry, whose post commanded the bank from which the embarkation had taken place, noticed something moving through the reeds which did not at first respond to his challenge. He was about to fire when the bow of the canoe was seen driving through the reeds, the pre-arranged signal which was to indicate "a friend" was given, and the gallant adventurer regained the shore. His expedition had failed in effecting the object for which it was originally intended; but information of extreme value to the allies had been obtained. The man reported that he had paddled unseen for a considerable distance, when he found the whole breadth of the harbour crossed by a bridge of boats over which troops were passing. He had at once to stop, and, as there was no place for concealment, to remain motionless, in the hope that his well disguised canoe would not be noticed. Thus, in fact, he did remain till nearly daylight, when the procession of troops ceased, but the increasing light making any attempt on the fleet below impossible. With extreme caution he retraced his course, till he found a friendly clump of reeds behind which during the whole of the day he concealed himself. As soon as darkness came on he paddled back to the spot whence he had embarked and regained safety. The position of the bridge of boats had never been ascertained; indeed its existence even had been doubted, and this was now cleared up.

Long before the plucky explorer returned, Colonel

Foley and the French officers went back to the place where they had tethered their ponies in hiding. Foley's pony was missing; the empty head collar was lying on the ground, and one of the bluejackets, picking it up, was overheard to say, "Well, the beggar has left his b—— painter behind him, any way." Poor Foley had to make his way afoot some four or five miles to the French headquarters.

To Capt. Hatton, Regimental Adjutant of the Grenadier Guards.

Before Sebastopol, 17th Oct., 1854.

MY DEAR HATTON,

It is an exciting moment to choose to begin a letter to you, for my ears are deafened as I write by the most tremendous cannonade that perhaps has ever been heard since gunpowder became an element of war. At half-past six this morning the French and English batteries, each numbering 73 guns, opened fire on Sebastopol simultaneously, and have now been hard at it for six hours. The stillness of the day and the little wind prevented our seeing much, except at the point just opposite to us; but, if I may judge by the slackened fire, our guns have already told severely on the earthworks of the Russians, and I can see with my telescope that the "Tower" which forms the centre of their principal battery is completely silenced. The Fleet are at this moment approaching the sea forts, and I expect to hear their broadsides open very shortly. . . . I believe it is the intention of the admirals to force an entrance into the port so soon as their broadsides have silenced the stone forts at the entrance. . . . We are, of course, held in readiness to act in case of our being required to make a movement in advance, but I do not imagine our services will be called upon to-day. The bombardment is to go steadily on for forty-eight hours,

and then the place, I am told, is to be summoned. . . . You will readily understand that our Grenadiers have had no easy time of it for the last five or six days. They have been in the trenches, either as working or covering parties, almost incessantly; such luxury as six hours' continuous rest being positively unknown. Yet the urgency of the moment and the real British pluck, choked off any grumbling that might naturally arise to the lips of some fine fellow who, after returning off twenty-four hours of outpost, found himself named for twenty-four hours of covering party in No. 1 Battery. Not a growl has been heard save expressions of a fair intention of paying Master Nicholas off when the preparations for the attack are made. Yesterday we had 300 men in the left battery of the right attack (Gordon's). About ten o'clock in the morning the Russians opened a most terrific fire on this battery which lasted three-quarters of an hour. Poor Rowley,* who with his Company was lying in a stone quarry a little to the left of the trench, fell a victim. A round shot, striking a large stone close to him, bounded straight in the air and fell perpendicularly on his back. Death was almost instantaneous. So heavy was the fire that any communication between the quarry and the trench was attended with the greatest danger, though the distance was not more than 20 yards; yet notwithstanding this an assistant-surgeon, Wilson of the 7th Hussars, who has been attached to us since Hathwaite's death, went through the thick of the fire across to him in hopes of being of some use. His conduct is beyond all praise.

Besides him we had eight men hit, but they are all doing well though one has a broken thigh and another a broken arm. . . . Hurrah! There go the guns of the Fleet. Now we shall see whether the stone walls of the Crimea stand our battering better than the Baltic granite!

* Albert Evelyn, lieutenant Grenadier Guards, second son of Sir Charles Rowley.

The French talk of getting into the town on their side to-night, but I doubt that being practicable; perhaps to-morrow, if our guns are well served all night, we may all be in and the "game up." We have sent ten good shots (volunteers) as sharpshooters under Cameron. These men advance in front of our batteries, and their duty is to pick off the artillerymen at the guns. . . .

Just in front of me I see rising some 200 feet into the air a sort of huge tree of white smoke, caused by the explosion of the magazine in one of the Russian batteries. This cannot last as it is; the Fleet must either gain their point or be sunk. . . . We are none of us ashamed to confess that we look forward to the Mediterranean (some more sanguine ones say England) for the winter. Our clothing is of course at Scutari, and right welcome will it be to our ragged warriors, whose trousers are patched with every sort of substitute for cloth. The Quartermaster-General, I see, begs that we will send him our half-yearly returns of quarters ending last July. He must wait till we can get our knapsacks and orderly-room papers. At present the only paper, pens, and ink we have I carry in my sabretâche, as we are in light-marching order, and books and papers are out of the question. . . .

8 p.m.— . . . I wish I could tell you more of the result of the day. All we know is that our batteries have done their work right well, and have silenced the Russian works opposed to them, and blown up the magazine in the principal redan. The French have made a series of blunders, both in engineering and in practice. Since nine this morning their guns have been silenced; but they will resume, they say, to-morrow morning. Their expense magazine exploded! We are anxious for news from the Fleet, who were at work for four hours; the smoke was so great up to dark that we can see nothing. I expect to hear that the forts are destroyed. . . . I see by the papers

that you think we have taken the place. Forty-eight hours more, and all, I think, will be over. . . .

To General Higginson (my father).

20th.— . . . This is now the seventh morning of our cannonade, and we are no nearer apparently than when we began. But deserters continue to come in, and they all agree that the slaughter has been fearful in the town, and that disaffection and misery are doing their work in our cause. So probably we shall be in in a day or two. Then there are the ships and the forts on the opposite side to tackle, all of which will require time. . . .

22nd.— . . . Still before Sebastopol, notwithstanding what your newspapers were good enough to say about our having already taken it; a piece of news which made us all very angry, I can tell you, as it implied our campaign to have been merely a case of “*veni, vidi, vici*.” You, my dear General, can well understand that the siege and capture of a strong fortress is not accomplished in a day; and I am told by those who understand this description of warfare better than myself that we ought to be perfectly satisfied with what has been done. There is no doubt that the French have caused the delay. They began by placing their batteries ill, and were enfiladed. They had their magazine three times blown up, and the Russians in a sortie spiked five of their guns. However, they are only made more resolute than ever by this slight failure, and they will gain their point in the end.

. . . Last night we were actually without an alarm, and the continuous sleep was most refreshing. Deserters come in daily and report the state of the town as awful. The numbers of killed and wounded that lie unburied are described by these deserters as extraordinary. Probably two more days will bring a crisis, and the French will

storm on their side. I believe, however, they wish to avoid this, if possible, as they fear a demoralization among their men after a successful assault. The Lancaster guns have not fulfilled the expectations that were formed of them, and the Chatham engineers will do well for the future not to despise earthworks, for they have shown a vast superiority over the stone forts.

The Fleet, as you will have heard, did just nothing, and lost no end of men. Dundas had better retire to his armchair and leave his flag to Lyons.

However, Lord Raglan and his staff are, I am told, in high spirits ; so we little people ought to look pleasant.

Cholera has, thank God, left us, and as the weather is still fine, and almost as warm as July in England, we are indeed fortunate. I continue very well, and look brightly forward to a glorious termination to this most eventful campaign. .

The result of the bombardment was disappointing. It was becoming clear that we were in for a long siege. On the 25th October General Liprandi made a vigorous effort to recapture the port of Balaklava and destroy our shipping which lay crowded therein.

A very early reconnaissance in the misty morning appears to have satisfied the Russian general that the force opposed to him was too weak to resist a serious attack. The four redoubts crowning the ridge which divides the plain of Balaklava into two broad valleys were held by Tunisians, the worst soldiers of the Turkish Army: men who scarcely knew the use of arms, and could in no way be depended upon. The first intimation we received came from Jem Macdonald,* who, riding up

* The Hon. James Macdonald, second son of the third Lord Macdonald, Aide-de-Camp to the Duke of Cambridge. Died in 1882.

in the early morning after conveying an order to our general, exclaimed in his cheery tones, "There's a row going on down in the plain of Balaklava, and you fellows are wanted."

Every disposable man was under arms directly and the three battalions of Guards followed by the 42nd and 79th Highlanders (the 93rd being already with Sir Colin Campbell at Balaklava), started on their six-mile march from the Inkerman plateau to Balaklava. Being mounted, I was able to watch from the crest of the plateau as we proceeded, the advancing columns of the Russians and the hurried desertion by the Tunisians of the four redoubts which, without loss of time, were occupied by the enemy, who turned the guns they captured upon the wretched Turks fleeing across the plain to seek shelter. The contour of the ground prevented my seeing the Heavy Cavalry Brigade, whose camp lay much nearer the port, but I was able to discern Lord Raglan and his Staff engaged with the French general at a point of vantage above the plain.

We had proceeded rather more than half way when I met Captain Nolan riding up from the lower ground, apparently in search of the adjutant-general. As Captain Nolan's name has acquired great prominence, he being the officer who conveyed to Lord Lucan the ambiguously worded order which led to the annihilation of the Light Cavalry Brigade, I do not cast any reflection on his memory by recording the impression he gave me during the short conversation we held together, that under the stress of some great excitement he had lost self-command. It was well-known in the army that he held exaggerated

views on the capability of cavalry to perform any daring act; and I do not doubt that, in conveying the written order, both his manner and language would have given offence to superior officers of calmer temperaments than either Lord Lucan or Lord Cardigan.

Riding on a little further, I was able to watch the advance of a heavy mass of Russian cavalry across the plain which separated the captured redoubts from the position in front of Balaklava occupied at the moment only by the 93rd Highlanders and two weak Tunisian regiments, together with a battery of artillery. Advancing slowly at first, the Russian cavalry drew forward without very accurate formation, till the squadrons approaching the 93rd line seemed to hesitate to charge. I then noticed the smoke from the first volley of the 93rd delivered with the utmost precision at the distance, so far as I could judge, of about two hundred yards. This brought the Russians to a halt; on receiving a second volley, with a discharge from the guns, the whole force wheeled about and retired in confusion in the direction of the redoubts, though I could not observe any casualties. The moral effect of the two volleys of the Highlanders, and the resolute front which their line presented, was sufficient for the moment to avert the almost irretrievable disaster which must have followed had they showed the slightest symptom of weakness. How the retiring Russian cavalry escaped annihilation by General Scarlett's brigade has been frequently commented on, reflecting on the judgment and the lack of apprehension of the moment for a cavalry attack; but I confine myself here to describing exactly what came under my personal notice on that memorable day.

Meanwhile the Brigade of Guards had been formed up in the plain, awaiting orders to retake the captured redoubts which the Russians had occupied in force. The Highland Brigade was now completed by the arrival of the 42nd and 79th from Inkerman, and had been reinforced by the Fourth Division, so the port was secure from attack for the present. . . . Through a gap in the ridge on which the redoubts stood, I saw, though at a great distance, the Light Cavalry Brigade advancing on the plain beyond the ridge. I saw the 17th Lancers lower their lances, break into a canter, and pass out of my sight on their deadly mission. We heard the heavy firing of the Russian guns; we could even hear from time to time the shouts of those engaged behind the hill; but we had no knowledge of how things were going, and we received no orders.

Presently, however, George Paget* rode up to me as I was standing at some distance in front of our line of columns, and I shall never forget the expression of his countenance as he said, "God alone knows what has happened to my poor regiment!" His description of the charge was too vague and short to convey more than that the Light Cavalry had ceased to exist. Shortly afterwards, Poulett Somerset† rode up with the information that we should probably receive the order to retake the redoubts. As the evening was now drawing on and the men had not even had any breakfast, it would be idle to say that we looked forward with ardour to the task before

* Lord George Paget, sixth son of the first Marquess of Anglesey; commanded the third line in the Charge of the Light Brigade. Died in 1880.

† Col. Poulett Somerset, Coldstream Guards, son of General Lord Charles Somerset, and grandson of fifth Duke of Beaufort. Died in 1875.

us. We were ready for it, however, when another aide-de camp of Lord Raglan's galloped up and ordered us to return to our camp at Inkerman without delay, no further movement of attack being intended that evening.

We reached our camp, after dark, weary and dispirited, for a grave disaster had befallen the army.*

Heights above Sebastopol.

October 27th, 1854.—Yesterday was indeed a joyful day, for I received your letters of the 9th, and found that our efforts at Alma had met with your approval, and that of everyone in dear old England. . . . We are all perfectly satisfied with Lord Raglan's despatch of the 21st.† It gives a clear, comprehensive and gentlemanlike account of the day's work and is quite worthy of its writer's character. . . . I collected a hundred or two of the men round me and read them the account given of the Brigade of Guards, and also the paragraph about the sickness, privations, etc., that they had so cheerfully endured. I never saw fellows so pleased; they were just beginning to talk it over, when up gallops an aide-de-camp and "Stand to your arms!" is the word. By Jove! the Russians were advancing bang up the hill on our right front, driving in the pickets of the Second Division, and stated to be in numbers about 10,000 men with 32 guns. You may imagine we were in the ranks like a shot; but our numbers were sadly small, as we had furnished outlying pickets and working parties, so that I could only muster 270 Grenadiers. We trotted off instantly to our right, and formed in support of Evans's (the Second) Division who mustered about 1800 bayonets. Guns arrived in considerable numbers, and not a bit too soon, for the Russians were in such force that the pickets could make no stand

* See Note, p. 191.

† On the battle of the Alma.

against them. However, bang, bang! went our nine-pounders, well charged with spherical case, and whiz! went the rockets at the advancing columns, while pop, pop were heard the miniés of the 30th and 49th Regiments, which, as soon as we arrived in support, advanced upon the enemy in the broken ground. Notwithstanding a perfect hailstorm from our field batteries the four dense columns continued to advance till the aforesaid miniés began to tell vigorously upon them. The red-coats advanced, the artillery redoubled their shot and shell, and away went the Muscovites. The 30th and 49th pursued them up to the very walls of Sebastopol; during their retreat one of the Lancaster guns was brought to bear upon the columns, and, as one of our sharpshooters described it to me, cut regular roads through them. It was a brilliant little affair for the Second Division, we, though in support, did not fire a shot, though we were for some little time "ducking" at the Russian bullets. Our loss (I mean the English) is 3 officers wounded and 58 men killed and wounded. The Russians must have suffered fearfully, we know of 400 killed and wounded; of the latter a great many are in our field hospitals, and it is but fair to suppose that they carried with them into Sebastopol a good many *hors-de-combat*. . . . There is no doubt that our Minié rifles tell wonderfully; they are beautiful weapons and of the greatest value to us. As for the siege, we are told that all is going well. We keep up a slack, but continuous, fire on the devoted city, while the French are drawing their approaches closer and closer. A few days more must decide the matter, and Sebastopol will either be ours or in ashes. Our front towards the enemy is too extended for our force, and if we are to watch the town well, and at the same time keep these heights undisturbed, we ought to give up a place which is no longer of great use to us and which is, undoubtedly, an excrescence from our proper line of defence. So you must not be

surprised to hear that Balaklava is abandoned . . . However much one becomes externally hardened to scenes of death and misery, there can be no doubt that this campaign has wrought great changes in the minds of many, who probably before thought but little of things above! I think the same applies to our men who talk more like Cromwell's soldiers than cavaliers about the war.

. . . We have nothing more than we had when we landed, except an extra shirt or two which we got up from the ships, and an ordnance blanket which each officer had served out to him. My bed is composed of an old sack, begged from the Commissariat, which I have stuffed with a little hay borrowed from "Squirrel," my blanket underneath, my regimental cloak over me, and sword and cap by my side; there I am! I am generally up two or three times in each night, as working parties, etc., have to be paraded, so undressing is out of the question. Fortunately I get plenty of cold water, so my indiarubber bucket serves me in good stead each morning outside our tent, I say *ours*, for Hamilton and Lindsay are tent fellows with me. My Uncle K.'s clasp knife and old fork, my school spoon and one of your silver mugs form my *batterie de cuisine*, or rather my service of plate, and my servant's mess tin boils the water. And still we live quite luxuriously, I sometimes think, for we send down to the ships, and we have quite a little cellar of port, sherry, and brandy. I breakfast between six and seven and dine at three, if possible, finishing the evening with a bucket full of coffee or tea. Bread, milk, butter, or fresh vegetables, except rice, I have long been a stranger to, and shall no longer consider them necessaries of life; though I dare say I shall not enjoy them the less when I get a chance of a dig at fresh provisions. The weather continues very fine, and the nights are not near so cold as we expected they would be, but it is evident that there must be a change ere long; the days are provokingly short, as it is now

nearly dark at half-past five, and the sun does not rise till after 6 a.m. However, I have health, strength, good spirits, plenty of friends here, and all of you to look forward to, so what have I to complain of? On the contrary, I feel every hour that I am not sufficiently grateful for the blessings that have fallen to my lot. That a speedy end to this business and a return to England is the wish of all of us, I am not ashamed to own, but if we are to stay till Nicholas has had enough of it, why stay we must, and look pleasant!

NOTE

THE LIGHT CAVALRY BRIGADE AT BALAKLAVA

I have related briefly in the text the facts and incidents of the 25th October, 1854, which fell under my personal notice; but so much has been said and written about the cavalry fight at Balaklava that I do not hesitate to record my opinion which the lapse of years has matured. It confirms the belief which many of us had formed at the beginning of the campaign that the Government had committed a grave error of judgment in appointing Lord Lucan and Lord Cardigan to commands which, in order to secure efficiency, needed confidential relations and thoroughly good understanding between the two chiefs. It was well known to every member of the Government that the two men were not on friendly terms. In proof of this I have only to refer my readers to the letters published in the *Times* newspaper in April, 1855, by each of the officers in question wherein neither attempts to conceal the total absence of any desire or intention to throw aside the barrier of personal antipathy, the indulgence in which might imperil not only the success of

the operations, but also the lives of those entrusted to their care. It is perfectly true that the order which Lord Lucan received at the hands of Captain Nolan was so worded as to place him in a very cruel dilemma, for on him as general officer in command of the Cavalry Division rested primarily the full responsibility for the due interpretation of that order, and had it been possible for a cordial exchange of opinion between him and his subordinate, Lord Cardigan, at this critical moment, it is just possible that the catastrophe which ensued might have been averted.

It is conceded now by all that it was madness to interpret the order literally, but had Lord Lucan refused to obey it, we should never have heard of that chivalrous display of courage, of the frightful carnage which ensued, and of the self-devotion of the victims. It is one of those questions which, like many others connected with that winter in the Crimea, can never be settled without throwing blame on some one. Regarded in its worst light it was an error of judgment.

In the autumn of 1856, I met Sir George Brown at Gordon Castle, where Lord Cardigan had also been recently a visitor, and, in describing the charge, had placed the brilliant performance of the Light Brigade in a light more favourable to their prowess than to the actual result of the reckless adventure. Upon the Duke of Richmond repeating this to Sir George Brown, the old general turned to me and said, in almost solemn language, "I ask you whether there was one single day during the whole war when the weight of disaster fell more heavily upon us than the day of Balaklava?"

Many years afterwards, a short time before his death in 1888, I was sitting with Lord Lucan in his house in London, I asked him whether he could throw any light upon the doubtful interpretation of the order he received at the hands of Captain Nolan from Sir Richard Airey, and how it affected the events which followed. He then related in forcible, but not unkindly, words his own version of the whole events of that memorable day of Balaklava, including the charge of the Heavy Brigade under General Scarlett. I was greatly impressed by Lord Lucan's dignified acceptance of a responsibility from which a man of less firmness of character would have shrunk, and by his desire to render justice to all who had yielded to it such loyal obedience. I left him thoroughly convinced that, besides the great qualities expected from every cavalry leader, he possessed that high sense of responsibility which calls for the respect and trustful recognition from those under his command.

With regard to Lord Cardigan I shall always consider that his brilliant reputation as a chivalrous cavalry leader was marred by lack of that moral courage which enables a commander to grasp every favourable opportunity however great the risk he may run.

In conclusion, however, I revert to my original opinion—that the blame lay primarily with the Government in selecting two men known to be estranged to each other in private life, for commands in which efficiency could only be secured through perfect cordiality and co-operation between them.

CHAPTER X

THE SIEGE CONTINUED

November, 1854

THE course of events after the end of October did nothing to justify the cheerful tone of the letter to my father quoted at the end of the last chapter. No doubt I placed things in as rosy a light as possible out of consideration for anxious hearts at home; but matters were soon to arrive at so grave a pitch that one could no longer feign to be light-hearted.

I believe that orders were sent both to the navy and the troops in Balaklava to make preparations for evacuating that port, but happily Liprandi made no effort to renew his attack. The remainder of the Highland Brigade were sent down to reinforce Sir Colin, who had charge of the defences, which he proceeded to strengthen by every possible means, and with the vigour which distinguished this veteran soldier. If, however, the Russians had shown any enterprise and placed mortars or heavy guns on the redoubt nearest to the port, our position at Balaklava would indeed have been perilous, for the siege operations would not have admitted of our sending a force sufficient for its protection. Yet it was evident that the Russians did not propose to remain idle. On the morning of the 26th we had the brush with them described in the last chapter—an action always afterwards known among the

troops engaged as "Little Inkerman." No doubt the object of General Liprandi was such a reconnaissance as would enable him to act with force and precision a little later. . . .

The prospect before us was anything but encouraging. The promised supplies of clothing had not yet arrived from England; rations were scanty, and the work of the trenches and outposts severely tried the endurance of officers and men. My poor friend Dunkellin had been taken prisoner only a few days previous, owing to imperfect knowledge of the ground on which our advanced works were being constructed. Several of our senior officers were only supported by their indomitable pluck from yielding to the effects of dysentery and the impossibility of obtaining proper food or remedies. This condition of affairs was but a bad augury for the events which were shortly to follow. The men had recovered their knapsacks;* but I grieve to say that in very many cases they had been rifled of their contents. Supplies of clothing and shoes from England, so anxiously looked for, we were doomed not to receive for many long weeks; for the ships that bore them were wrecked or scattered by the great storm of 14th November. This untimely loss, and the unavoidable delay in remedying it, were undoubtedly the chief cause of our subsequent sufferings.

It was part of my duty to parade the reliefs for the outposts in the trenches between three and four in the morning, and the sight of our gaunt Grenadiers, dimly

* It may be remembered that Lord Raglan was persuaded by the Medical Staff to order all the men's knapsacks and their contents to be left on board ship when landing in the Crimea.

illuminated by the light of a lantern as I walked down the ranks, filled me as much with admiration as with foreboding. Not a man faltered, although in many cases their feet protruded from their worn-out boots, and the ragged trouser was tied round the ankle with string; while hollow cheeks and set features told a tale of suffering and endurance. Before marching off, a "tot" of rum was given to each man, who carried in his haversack the pork and biscuit which were to furnish his meals for the next twenty-four hours.

To Captain Hatton.

4th November, 1854.— . . . We have this day sent on board ship for conveyance to England our sergeant-major. As I feared, his health could not stand the fatigue and exposure to which he has been subjected. For the last month he has been non-effective, though struggling most manfully against his failing powers. . . .

. . . The French appear to be very nearly ready for storming; our Third and Fourth Divisions are told off already for our share in the proceedings, and have had scaling ladders issued to them, which looks very like business indeed. I have just heard, too, that the *Agamemnon* is clearing away her bulk-heads to be ready for action; so the Fleet are bent upon another shy at the forts. All this looks as if we were approaching our much wished for consummation. . . .

All our posts mount in great coats, and the sentries in forage caps, and all sentries are double. The cold at night is becoming very great, and as I feared, its effects are beginning to tell upon the sickly men: but your draft from England will keep us going a little longer, before our once fair proportions become skeleton. My health quite surprises me; I eat and drink like a cannibal, and I

have quite learnt to find that a waterdeck on the ground with a cloak underneath and a blanket over is as good a couch for this sort of thing as a man can wish for: not but what I shall quite relish a four-poster when I get a chance.

These lines were penned only a few hours before we were in the thick of the fiercest battle we had yet experienced. The historian will not write of Inkerman as one of the decisive battles of the world; greater conflicts have raged since that far off 5th of November, arresting national progress and paralysing for a time the energies of the civilized world; yet, as I look back upon that scene through the mists of more than sixty years, I feel a glow of pride in the splendid spirit which enabled 9000 British Infantry to withstand the onslaught of 30,000 resolute Russians.

Reminding my readers that I still adhere closely to my scheme of describing only what I myself witnessed, I may mention that there is still preserved in the Records of the Grenadier Guards a letter written by me on the day following the action to Captain Hatton, the regimental adjutant at home, containing a full account of the battle. I did not, however, refer in that letter to the momentary shock of despair which I felt, when, on forming our line on the ridge of the Second Division, and seeing beneath us the grey coats of the huge advancing column of the enemy, our Brigadier-General Bentinck, by whose side I was riding, gave the order to "charge," and I witnessed the rush of the line of Grenadiers and Scots Fusiliers down the rugged slope, full upon the advancing host. The exulting cheer which foretold the brilliant result of the

charge confirmed my dread that our gallant fellows would soon get out of hand; and in fact, except for one short period during the long day when we contrived some kind of regular formation, the contest was maintained by groups under company officers, who were unable, owing to the mist and smoke of musketry fire, to preserve any definite touch. I believe we were the only regiment that day that took its colours into action. The Coldstream were still on picquet duty, distributed along a long line of outposts, and had therefore not formed part of our original line. Summoned hastily to join us, they came up in detachments into the action, suffering more severely than any of us in their loss of officers.

I do not think that in my letter I referred to my having parted company at last with my faithful little charger "Squirrel." We were rallying our men for the third or fourth time behind the Sandbag Battery, which we lost and re-took time after time, and it was during one of these contests when, for the moment, our men had to fall back, and as I turned my horse's head to follow them, she instantly fell over on her side with my left leg underneath. I extricated myself with difficulty, and got my revolver out of the holster. I found my cloak heavily saturated with blood, and had just time to notice a bullet wound in her side, when I limped back with a sprained ankle to the nearest group of Grenadiers, who soon rallied and retook the point of vantage which this Sandbag or Two-Gun Battery afforded. Here I found "Squirrel" lying dead, stripped of saddle, bridle and everything, which must have been rather valuable prizes to the enemy, for I had made a point of having everything kept in readiness on the

saddle—food, flask, writing-pad, etc.—so as to be prepared for any emergency night or day.

Again hurled back from their little Sandbag Battery or Redoubt (for it is difficult to give it a name, inasmuch as it had never been armed, and was not much more than thirty feet wide, with embrasures for two guns), our Grenadiers formed a compact body around the colours, while I limped off a short distance to the left, hoping to descry through the mist and fog the approach of reinforcements; but I found the gap increasing and, as it was afterwards proved, the remainder of our comrades, with the Scots Fusiliers, were encountering another heavy column of the enemy threatening the left of our position. It was at this moment that I saw a figure in naval uniform, rendered more distinctive by a tall glazed hat, coming towards me. The new arrival proved to be Captain Peel of the *Diamond*,* one of the most adventurous and daring of that Naval Brigade which had been landed to take part in the siege operations. On my expressing astonishment at seeing him amongst us at such a moment, he simply remarked, “Oh, there was nothing going on at my little battery on the hill behind; and as I heard you fellows had plenty to do, I thought I would come and have a look at you.” I replied with some gravity of manner that we were in a tight place awaiting supply of ammunition and long expected support. While this conversation was going on, I felt a bullet pass from behind through my bearskin cap, causing me, for the moment, to

* Captain, afterwards Sir William Peel, R.N., V.C., third son of Sir Robert Peel, the statesman. Served with Lushington's Naval Brigade in the Crimea, and commanded the Naval Brigade in the Indian Mutiny. Died of smallpox at Cawnpore in 1858.

stoop forward. I exclaimed, "This is rather hard lines! here are our own fellows mistaking us for the enemy, and firing upon us, instead of coming to our relief." He turned his field-glass in the direction I pointed, and said in a subdued voice, "No, by heaven! it is the enemy getting round our rear."

I moved at once to our sturdy group rallied round the colours, and explained to Charles Lindsay, the only officer that at the moment I could find, our new danger, and then began our ever-to-be-remembered retreat.

Clustered round the colours, with scarcely a round of ammunition left, the men pressed slowly backwards, keeping their front full towards the enemy, their bayonets ready at the "charge." As a comrade fell, wounded or dead, his fellow took his place, and maintained the compactness of the gradually diminishing group, that held on with unflinching stubbornness in protecting the flags. More than once from the lips of this devoted band of non-commissioned officers and rank-and-file came the shout, "Hold up the colours!" fearing, no doubt, that in the mist and smoke they might lose sight or touch of those honoured emblems, which they were determined to preserve, or in their defence to die. The two young officers, Verschoyle and Turner, raised them well above their heads, half unfurled, and in this order we moved slowly back, exposed to a fire, fortunately desultory and ill-aimed, from front, rear, and left flank. Happily the ground on our right was so precipitous as to deter the enemy from attempting to outflank us on that side. As from time to time some Russian soldiers, more adventurous than their fellows, sprang forward towards our compact group, two or

three of our Grenadiers would dash out with the bayonet and compel speedy retreat. Nevertheless, our position was critical. By the time, however, we had traversed half the distance to the breastwork of the Second Division (which I proved by subsequent measurement to be 700 yards distant from the Sandbag Battery), the pressure on our rear and left was relaxed, the Russian column having been sternly repulsed by the force occupying the ridge; while our men welcomed with a cheer a company of Zouaves bringing up at last on our right the timely aid which General Bosquet had, no doubt for sufficient reasons, been prevented from sending earlier. The enemy on our immediate front soon realized the danger of a further advance and fell back.

Free at length to rejoin our main body, we hastened our pace, and soon descried the Duke of Cambridge and the rest of our Brigade on the crest of the ridge. I shall never forget the cheer with which the returning colours were welcomed by all ranks, H.R.H. being almost moved to tears, for, as they all said, "We had given you up for lost."

Many a time have my thoughts flown back over the waste of years to this stirring episode; many a time I have told the story among friends; never until now have I ventured to commit it to writing; for, indeed, my pen would have failed at any time in an attempt to impress a reader with the varying emotion which filled my mind while the safety of our colours was in jeopardy. The mere possibility of the colours of the First Regiment of our Sovereign's Guards being laid as a trophy at the feet of the Czar had to be faced, and I believe that a prayer went

up from all of us that such dishonour might be averted at all costs. Certainly the grave faces and resolute attitude of our Grenadiers made me realize that there was no exaggeration in the language used by Sir William Napier in his well-known description of the behaviour of the 1500 British soldiers, all who remained to stand triumphant on the fatal hill at Albuera—"None know with what majesty the British soldier fights."

Time has not served to dim my respect and admiration for the bravery and devotion of this little group of Grenadiers in the defence of their colours on the day of Inkerman. The tattered fragments of those colours have found their final resting place on the walls of the Guards' Chapel. I feel confident that none of my readers is so cynical as to smile if I admit that I never enter that treasure-house of memorials, so dear to every member of the Brigade of Guards, and feel able to gaze without emotion on the colours which served as our rallying point on the dark upland of Inkerman.

To resume: Though the position we now held on the crest of the ridge was one of comparative safety, it was exposed to artillery fire, and we were losing men. We therefore moved further to our left, and, while thus changing our ground I came upon the dead body of Granville Eliot,* over which stood his young brother † (who, I believe, had come up from the Fleet the night before on a visit), apparently paralysed with grief and indifferent to the danger of his position, exposed as it was to shot and shell. I tried in vain to induce him to move; no entreaty

* Second son of third Earl of St. Germans.

† Succeeded as fifth Earl of St. Germans in 1881. Died in 1911.

prevailed; that he escaped unwounded was little short of a miracle.

The arrival of Collingwood Dickson with his 18-pounder guns wheeled up by hand, arrested, and finally silenced, the Russian field-batteries; while the advance of a fresh brigade of French troops combined with the remnants of our exhausted Second and Fourth Divisions to turn the retreat of the Russians, already begun, into a rout. The pursuit was continued almost to the fortifications of the town itself, as the shades of evening closed upon the stricken field. We regained our camp, where, I need hardly say, our first thought after the arms had been examined, piled, and a fresh supply of ammunition provided, was how to obtain food, as we had had nothing to eat since the previous night. Happily the few men unavoidably left in camp had done their best, and the camp kettles were soon hissing on the hastily made fires, round which our exhausted men gathered together. My servant, however, had contrived with extraordinary foresight to provide the materials for a savoury mess, and soon my tent was crowded with famished comrades. Although rice and pork were the chief ingredients, I doubt whether any meal had ever been more thoroughly welcome. It may seem strange, but so high had been the nervous tension during the whole of the day that we found ourselves laughing.

My servant, having seen to all our wants, asked whether he might go. Happening to require his services at the moment I asked him why. "Only to have my wound dressed," was his quiet reply. He then showed me a gaping wound on his leg! This is only one instance out of many I could mention of the extraordinary pluck

and endurance shown by our men, whether fighting in the ranks or engaged in ordinary duties of routine. Acting only as my temporary servant, Richard Ivimey had been engaged with all of us during the whole day, without food and nothing to sustain him but his own strong resolution; yet at the close, instead of claiming the assistance of the surgeon and the comparative quiet of the field hospital, he devoted his remaining strength to ensuring the comfort of his master. Though an extremely irregular soldier in time of peace, he was a splendid type of those men who on active service can be depended upon to maintain the honour and credit of their regiment.

It was not till the following morning that Prince Edward's company could be relieved from the advanced picquet which it held during the battle, at the point where the great ravine leading from Sebastopol up to the Inkerman ridge is divided into two forks or lesser ravines. Here a rocky and precipitous tongue of land afforded secure and advantageous cover for Prince Edward's men. He was enabled from a post of vantage to pour an accurate and deliberate fire into the Russian General Soimonoff's columns, hesitating as they did at the diverging forks of the ravine. It had been intended that a large force should move by the right fork to attack and cut off the Light Division, while the left joined the advancing columns on the Inkerman ridge. The fire of the advanced regiments of the Light Division, combined with that of Prince Edward's well protected outpost, caused the Russian advance to hesitate. Eventually the column of the right ravine rejoined that of the left, and thus hampered the movement of the unwieldy masses already advancing to the

attack of the Second Division. I lay some stress on this, because, although the loss in Prince Edward's company was slight in comparison to the rest of the battalion, I am convinced that the almost unassailable post that he occupied, and the cool precision with which his men delivered their fire, contributed largely to lead General Soimonoff into committing the fatal mistake for which he has been so justly blamed.

To return, however, to our camp and the remaining incidents which closed the events of a day on which I can never look back without much pride and thankfulness, notwithstanding that its memories are overshadowed by the loss of so many friends. On the very day before the battle I was walking about the camp with Henry Neville,* one of my oldest and dearest friends—always cheerful, always ready to help and set a good example. He spoke of the physical sufferings that he was enduring owing to the want of any comforts even of the simplest kind; during our conversation a violent fit of coughing affording terrible evidence of his condition. On the same afternoon I had a long conversation with Edward Pakenham,† to whom I think I have previously alluded as one of our best officers and in the truest sense a leader of men. Not long before we left England he had been elected member for County Antrim: and his constituents, though they recognized the claim of his military duty, insisted on his retaining his seat when he went on active service. He was the head of his family and owner of a considerable estate.

* Third son of the third Lord Braybrooke.

† Eldest son of Lieut.-General Sir Hercules Pakenham, and grandson of the second Earl of Longford.

We discussed his position frankly, and I have a perfect recollection of his reply when I asked him why he had not left the regiment before going into Parliament, "Well, I could not look at my father's picture in the old house at home and think of the honour he had won in the Peninsula, without feeling I ought to do something to maintain the family tradition. I have been in one good fight, had a fair share of this trench work and of the privations we have all endured; I think my constituency have a claim upon me, as, after all, I only command a company out here." I fully agreed with him, and urged both on him and Neville their duty to apply for leave to go home.

Another good officer, Newman,* spoke to me the same evening about the cruel bodily suffering he was undergoing, from which apparently there was no possible relief. It threatened to incapacitate him from the arduous night duty to which he was exposed every second or third day. Within four-and-twenty hours all three of these fine young men had met their death; not, alas! suddenly; but under the bayonets of a half-civilized foe, while lying wounded on the field of battle. Ten other officers of the Brigade, all of whom I could claim as friends, had fallen, while others lay wounded and suffering. Of 450 N.C.O.s and men in the 3rd Battalion on that memorable day, 102 lay dead on the field, 140 were returned as wounded, and barely 200 Grenadiers responded at roll-call.

We knew not at the moment that our victory had been so complete, and that the enemy was far too demoralized to renew the attack. We, therefore, had to be ready to

* Sir Robert Lydston Newman of Mamhead, Bart.

renew the conflict at any moment with sorely diminished numbers. Such care as was possible was rendered to the wounded: our dead comrades were left where they had fallen.

Camp before Sebastopol.

November 12th, 1854.— . . . Since the 5th the right of our army has been chiefly employed in burying the dead (a fearful work), and raising breastworks and redoubts, with the assistance of the French, on the position that was attacked. All this, there is no doubt, ought to have been done before; had such been the case the Russians would not, I think, have tried so bold a game; but in spite of daily representations regarding the exposed state of our right flank, the idea of redoubts, etc., was pooh-poohed and set aside. It is true we have given the enemy a tremendous thrashing; I believe Lord Raglan's estimate of their loss (15,000 men) to be a low one; but we cannot afford such victories where the end gained by us is not proportionate to the loss sustained. The Russians have acknowledged their defeat by returning an answer to a flag of truce, sent on the subject of the dead and wounded, that it was "the duty of those who maintained their position to bury their dead." . . .

. . . This evening we have been under arms I don't know how long, in consequence of an attack on the trenches, the result of which I have not yet heard. We shall probably remain thus, attacked one day and quiet the next, till large reinforcements arrive, and reinforcements you *must* send us, you excellent John Bulls, if you wish us to root this creature from his stronghold. Some French regiments are encamped close to us now as supports, and we have frequent conversations with them. They are loud in admiration of *la Garde*, who displayed, they say, *même trop de courage*; but it is evident that their admiration

closes with the material of the English army and does not extend to the Staff. It literally at this moment amounts to this, that each commanding officer acts as he thinks best, there being no directing hand. But I am getting on dangerous ground !

You would laugh if you saw me rolling each night an 18-lb. shot into my tent which I have heated in the fire and which saves a stove ! A good spirit lamp appears to me to be the best contrivance for winter work here, as fuel is scarce. . . .

CHAPTER XI

THE SIEGE CONTINUED

December, 1854

It brought some relief to our anxieties when the French generals at length sent long-promised support to the attenuated force which had so long held the dangerously exposed position on the Inkerman plateau. The Second Regiment of Zouaves, composed of two battalions, encamped close to us, and for the next two months became our fast friends. With every demonstration of good fellowship, they assisted us in collecting our wounded from the battlefield, as well as relieving us of part of our outpost duty. Their commanding officer, Colonel Cler, was a fine specimen of the French soldier of fortune. Tall, very good-looking, both by voice and manner, he inspired confidence and exacted that special discipline from his men which their service, hitherto only in Algeria, demanded.* Small of stature, mobile and intelligent in feature, the Zouaves moved about in their quaint, half-oriental uniform with an activity in curious contrast to that of our steady Grenadiers; but their respect and

* I saw much of Colonel Cler afterwards; he had distinguished himself at the re-capture of the Mamelon Vert, and subsequently in the engagement of the Tchernaja. On his return to France he became a general of division, and met his death at the battle of Magenta. Had he lived he would probably have become a Marshal of France.

friendly regard for our men was unmistakable, cemented as it was by frequent calls to arms after nightfall.

I do not propose to describe in detail the sufferings and brave endurance of our men during the next few weeks. The weather soon broke; snow began to fall; the great storm of the 14th November wrecked the ships which had just arrived off Balaklava, laden with stores and warm clothing whereof we stood so sorely in need, and we knew that weeks must elapse before this terrible loss could be replaced; but resignation, rather than the spirit of grumbling, prevailed throughout the camp. I cannot refrain, however, from alluding to the abnormal force and violence of the storm of the 14th. It fell upon our camp before dawn, increasing rapidly in violence. Every tent in our exposed position was laid low; such was the force of the wind that to stand upright without support was impossible, and we crouched as best we could under improvised parapets or any hollow of the ground which afforded shelter. The bearskin caps of our men, according to invariable custom, stood on short posts or pegs outside the tents; such was the violence of the successive blasts of the sou'-westerly gale that the whole of the bearskin caps of the battalion were blown into a ravine nearly a quarter of a mile off! Camp kettles and drums from the Light Division on our left, flew in like manner over our heads, lodging finally in the bushy scrub of the same ravine. It was not till nearly nightfall that the force of the wind subsided enough for fires to be lighted and a rough attempt at cooking could be made.

Next day we heard of the devastation at Balaklava—the wreck of the *Prince*, with its cargo of 60,000 blankets and medical stores, the total dispersal of the French

fleet, and the partial dispersal of our own, both being engaged in the blockade of Sebastopol. The Duke of Cambridge had a narrow escape on the same night, as the *Retribution*, the steam frigate on which he had embarked for home, was only saved from wreck by the skill and resolution of its commander, Captain James Drummond.* In short, it appeared as if catastrophe by sea and land was to try our endurance to the utmost. For the next six weeks no relief was to cheer either mind or body of the half-starved and scantily clothed British soldier who, nevertheless, dauntlessly persevered in the bitter task which the siege operations required of him.

By the first week in December, snow to the depth of eighteen inches had fallen, often thawing as it fell. I need not dwell upon the imperfect protection afforded by a tent, which could neither be warmed by a fire within nor protected from the downpour without. Narrow causeways of stone (of which plenty lay within easy reach) were made from tent to tent; walls four and five feet high sheltered the enclosures within which the cooking kitchens were constructed, and fires were with difficulty maintained day and night. I say with difficulty, for we could obtain no fuel save from the roots of the oak scrub which grew to the height of three or four feet in the rocky ravines. Extracted from the half-frozen ground by pick-axe and mattock, the green roots were kindled with difficulty; the result being smouldering embers, rather than the welcome blaze which would have served to dry the drenched and tattered great coats of the working parties, returning from their six-and-thirty hours in the trenches. My own early

* Afterwards Admiral Sir James Drummond, G.C.B., Usher of the Black Rod, second son of Viscount Strathallan.

breakfast was as follows: two navy biscuits were placed overnight in a tin inside my tent, and sufficient water poured upon them to soften their toughness by a night's soaking. As soon as my servant had succeeded in making a fire in my little enclosure outside the tent, the biscuit was broken up into a frying-pan, a thick slice or two of the fat of salt pork was added. While it was still hot and frizzling, I extracted bit by bit, not daring to remove the frying-pan lest it should harden again so as to be uneatable. Under the ashes of the fire I was in the habit of laying an 18-lb. shot, which gradually accumulated heat, so that in the evening it was transferred to the foot of my camp bed under my blankets, my damp clothes were heaped on the outside, and by this means I secured a certain amount of warmth for myself, and immunity from the danger of damp garments.

Yet amid all this suffering and privation, exposure and heavy strain on physical endurance, I never heard a despondent word. Any outburst of grumbling was immediately checked by common consent; the efforts of all ranks to alleviate suffering, and to provide some kind of weather-proof shelter for those of their comrades stricken down by utter exhaustion, was most praiseworthy. Ponies and even loose horses, unclaimed by former owners, could be had almost for the asking. An organized form of transport was soon formed, every officer giving his time when off-duty to making a journey to Balaklava, where his "bât" animal could secure a good feed of oats without difficulty, and return laden with planks and rafters. With these we gradually formed a hospital hut, and as ships were daily arriving at the port, bringing adventurous

traders of different nationalities, who supplied at extravagant prices tinned meats, chocolate, jam, etc., by degrees our regimental commissariat could provide a welcome change from the daily allowance of salt pork, beef, and biscuit, issued from the army stores.

Camp before Sebastopol.

December 1st, 1854.— . . . The mortality among the horses in our army has been fearful. In proportion as the rain and mud increased, their work has been greater and their food less; so that at every ten yards along the Balaklava road you may see dead and dying horses and deserted carts.

We have been more fortunate than the other divisions, and have hitherto got our rations, which many regiments have been without, so we have but little reason to complain. At the same time our exertions in helping the commissariat have been very great, and to this I mainly attribute the non-failure of our supplies. As for me and our mess, I am indebted to my Russian horse for all our "wittles"; as he yesterday, notwithstanding the rain, brought up two dozen of wine, about a dozen cases of preserved meat, three chairs, and a bag of potatoes on his back! We made, too, a wonderful haul of a dozen chickens, six ducks, two geese, and a turkey from a newly arrived ship. Young Hamilton is to-day employed in making a hen house and pen for our live stock, which quack and cackle like good old English poultry. So you see we cannot be said to be starving; but as we live almost perpetually in a state of swamp, I believe eating and drinking in moderation is the best antidote to any ill effects. . . .

Ships laden with woollen clothing and pea jackets begin to arrive, so that we are gradually getting armed with garments that will resist both wet and cold. This

is a great blessing, and the more traders that find out that Balaklava is a good market for speculation, the better.

7th.— . . . The chief occupation now in the day time consists in building, or rather digging, a hospital. The Engineers have given us the services of 100 "bono Johnnies," who, by dint of hard work and hard knocks (for we pitch into them just as if they were donkeys), have in five days excavated about as much as ten good Englishmen would have done in two days. However, I am getting on, and have been darting in and out of my tent half a dozen times since this letter was begun, to keep these wretches up to the mark, and see that my amateur Grenadier masons are building the wall straight. The fearful weather we have had renders a covered building for the sick positively necessary, so I am moving all I can to get much of this roofed in, in order to receive a few of our worst cases. The unemployed out of my 100 Turks are making roads about the camp with the rubble that is excavated; so, though they won't fight, we at any rate turn their physical powers to a little account. The sun is at this moment shining deliciously, so I do hope the worst is over.

Though a month has elapsed, I cannot quite get that awful day [of Inkerman] out of my head. I do verily believe that the annals of war could not show so great an instance of slaughter when the numbers engaged are considered. The Russians all say 24,000 to have been their actual loss—killed, wounded, and missing! However, it was a day only for Englishmen to boast of, not English generals. The less said about generalship the better. We began by being shamefully surprised, for which two poor officers of the Second Division are alone responsible. We fought for our lives and our camp, and no one received an order from any one!

The 90th Regiment arrived two days ago after a

passage of fourteen days from Dublin! What think you of that?

I have no incidents of the siege to tell you. The state of the roads has of course delayed our guns and mortars from getting into position; so that a desultory fire is all that goes on, except that generally twice during the night there is a shindy in the trenches, either with the French or our advanced works; which shindy invariably ends by the repulse of the Russians with loss.

12th.— . . . I could write you a long letter full of grievances, but I won't, as they would give you no more pleasure to read them than me to write them; so I will only allude to the affair of the despatch of Inkerman, at which we are all frantic. I can bear being slighted as well as any one, and heaven knows that in this army anybody in an official position, however humble, must not be too sensitive of snubs; but anything so materially false as the account of our doings at that great battle I never saw. Despatches are reckoned as sound materials for an historian to work upon, and should not be hastily or timidly framed. After the arrival of the Alma despatch, I called together the battalion and read the account with some pride; but on this occasion I could not bring myself to do it, so shamefully are we treated. However, I will not weary you with my growlings. Rest assured you will have enough in other quarters, for we are by degrees getting roused, and suppressed indignation at the long-endured neglect which we have most patiently submitted to will at last burst all bounds and assert the truth.

17th.— . . . I am getting almost tired of dating from the same place; and begin to think that we are intended to take root and vegetate in this cheerless plain. The continued rain would justify the belief that we should not perish from drought, for we are even now very water

plants, so great has been the downpour within the last few days. This is decidedly unlucky, as everything is retarded by the recurrence of rain and snow: however, I do not see that we have a right to expect much other weather than this, considering the time of year, and that we are within a week of the shortest day.

The French reinforcements arrive very regularly, and by their own account they will soon number 90,000 men in this country. We shall have about 20,000 effectives when all our additions arrive, so there will be enough, I hope, to conclude the business as far as the fortress is concerned. Our greatest and most terrible enemy is disease; which, changing its form and symptoms, clings like a log to our overworked men and daily demands a fresh victim. I try to think well of the arrangements and zeal of the higher powers, but in vain, and I do most solemnly believe that our men's sufferings, and the loss we have sustained of so many of their lives, are mainly to be attributed to the utter inefficiency of the whole staff of our army. To what purpose does the nation land supplies of all kinds if, when they reach Balaklava or Scutari, no notice is taken of their arrival, no provision made for issuing them to the half-starved soldiers, until it is found to be too late? What think you of a ship being sent to Scutari full of medical stores, and then, on arriving there, it having been found that the Ordnance had packed several tons of siege shot and shell on the top of the pills and medicines, so that no doctors' stuff could be landed till the vessel had gone to unlade her soldiers' stuff at Balaklava! That sort of thing occurs daily. Lord Raglan complains of the Commissariat, the Commissariat of Lord Raglan; the quarter-master-general of the adjutant-general and *vice versa*; while a grand accompaniment is echoed by the whole army who suffer, mark you! I am told, indeed it is a matter of history, that in our first campaigns after a long peace these things always occurred. All I can say is,

then, that I wish Providence had thought 'fit to send me to the second campaign instead of the first! All this, I beg to observe, is not intended to apply to my own brother officers' cases. We having, thank God, good health and a certain amount of energy left, besides the usual facilities, or rather advantages, that distinguish an officer's from a soldier's position, get on very well as far as living goes. We can get plenty to eat and drink, a change of clothes when wet and a bedstead to keep us off the swampy ground at night; so, beyond the irksome nature of our service and the inclement weather, we have nothing really to grumble at; but it is hard indeed to see men, all of whom are ill, struggling on deeper and deeper in the mire, till the natural indifference to anything like exertion on his own account, which is the characteristic of the British soldier, becomes gradually so painful as to justify one in believing what they have been heard to say, that if they may not at once "go in" at the Russians, they would as soon lie down and die as stir a finger to render their existence more tolerable.

Now, having indulged you with a long philippic against the Powers that be, I must tell you by way of apology that I am remarkably well myself and suffer from nothing except the worry and anxiety at seeing so much misery around me. . . .

22nd.— . . . You ask me to recommend what I think best for the men in case of your having funds placed at your disposal for their benefit. Well, I consider that ere long our fellows will be amply provided with clothing, so that is out of the question. Tobacco we can all get for them; but the thing they most like, and which they can never get too much of, is tea. The rations issued to them, in spite of repeated representations, are only coffee in the green berry; and that gives them a world of trouble in preparation, and in drinking—the stomach ache! So

stick to good sound black tea, brown sugar, and rice. They are always acceptable and are not plentiful here at all. Another thing: the sun sets at 4 and rises at 7.30. Does not this suggest candles? Candles and some simple cheap lanterns would be very useful. If, again, a greater flight is taken, and people wish to benefit the soldiers at large, let them tackle the subject of boots and shoes and send a cargo of boots, large ones, impervious to water as far as above the ankle. This, however, could only be done by communicating with the Authorities, and there you have the contractors' interests and influence in opposition. Half our sickness has been brought on by wet feet, and the present form of boot is by no means adapted for wading in mud! I, for one, am all for returning to the old-fashioned gaiters buttoning over the knee. . . .

I croaked so much in my last letter about blundering staff officers, etc., that I am ashamed to continue the strain, more especially as you excellent John Bulls have now taken the opposite view of our position here, and are imagining that we are in imminent peril of being driven into the sea by the ever-swelling army of old Nicholas. Here, however, you are going too far. It is true that we are decimated by disease and subject to so strange and unfortunate vicissitudes of weather that the progress of offensive movement cannot be other than slow; but do not think that these Kalmuck foes of ours are living in clover, or that they care to subject themselves to such a rap over the knuckles as they got at Inkerman. Each night there is a row in the trenches, and now and then a casualty; but beyond that I much doubt their being in a state to attack us. No; the edge of the wedge is *in*, and sooner or later the finale must be arrived at, as far as the fortress is concerned. As to further operations, I don't see my way at all; for I do not believe that England, with all her resources, will be able to recruit her army here fast enough.



CHRISTMAS DINNER IN MY TENT, 1855.

(In Camp before Sebastopol.)

From left to right—Capt. Frederick Bathurst, Capt. Sir Charles Russell, Bart., Lieut. Charles Turner, Capt. Alexander Viscount Balgonie, Capt. Burnaby, Lieut.-Col. Charles Lindsay, Colonel Frederick Wm. Hamilton, Lieut.-Col. Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, Capt. George Higginson, Lieut. Rt. Wm. Hamilton, Lieut. Sir J. Ferguson, Bart., Lieut. H. W. Verschayle.

This, and sundry other little events connected with the disposal of vacant regiments, to which, though I do not allude, my thoughts frequently and bitterly recur, would go far towards making me a very Cobden had I any spark of ambition in me. But whereas I thank God I care about as much for preferment and promotion in my profession (always, mark you, excepting my medal) as I do about the pitiful praise awarded to our services by a newspaper that a month before said we had to prove ourselves gentlemen as well as officers, I can afford to grieve for others and grin for myself. No, the army is essentially, as now constituted, the profession for a gentleman who cares not one sixpence whether he gains aught by serving, beyond the grateful feeling of self-respect and the approbation of those he loves. *Au reste*, I'd sooner drive a quill for forty years in Lombard Street; and so say all of us!

In a large volume of sketches made by Mr. William Simpson, an artist of considerable repute, there is a drawing entitled "A Christmas Dinner." The tent in that drawing was mine. I had decorated it as best I could, so that I and my brother officers could celebrate Christmas with as much cheeriness as we might muster. We had secured from a French sutler at Kamyesh some fearful effervescing stuff which was called champagne, some scraggy fowls and a ham, and the evening was passed with due conviviality, and interchange of those expressions of goodwill and friendship which only the strange tenour of our daily life could draw forth. I have often in subsequent years seen in London shop windows prints from this drawing, at the foot of which is given the names of those who were present at our Christmas dinner of 1854. The fact that I am the sole survivor of that

gallant company has come home to me, bringing a train of thought whereon to indulge a few reflections which may be accepted from one whose race is nearly run, by those who, among my younger readers, may be beginning a hopeful career in the regiment whose honour those good gentlemen did their utmost to preserve.

Simpson, the artist to whose sketches I have referred, presented himself at a later period, and we became great friends. I believe he was under an engagement to a firm of publishers in London to supply sketches of the war, and making due allowances for the difficulties which beset an artist illustrating both combats and siege operations in actual progress, his published works are both faithful and worthy of the artist's reputation. He appeared indifferent to danger when engaged with pencil and brush and was a cheery and welcome companion. Another artist of higher distinction, Mr. Armitage, R.A., paid us a visit in the early spring of 1855, and I was enabled to entertain him with such hospitality as our rough life would permit, while he made preliminary drawings for a large picture which he hoped would be accepted for the lobby of the House of Lords. He selected for his subject the episode of our defence of the colours at Inkerman, taking portraits of those present, and also obtaining all the evidence possible for the faithful illustration he desired to produce. Sometime after my return to England in 1856 I received from him a photograph of the completed picture, whereof the central group is here reproduced. I was not so fortunate as to meet Mr. Armitage again, nor have I ever been able to ascertain what became of the original picture.



THE RALLY ROUND THE COLOURS AT INKERMANN.

1. Duke of Cambridge. 2. Lieut.-Col. The Hon. Charles Lindsay. 3. Lieut. Turner. 4. Lieut. Verschaylo.
5. Captain Wm. Peel, R.N. 6. Captain Higginson.

CHAPTER XII

THE SIEGE CONTINUED

January, 1855

*Camp before Sebastopol,
January 5th, 1855.*

MY DEAR FATHER,

I am thawing the ink I am writing with, the frost having laid a violent grasp upon that in common with other liquids. . . .

. . . The winter has apparently set in in earnest, and we have eighteen inches of snow on our heights. The work in the trenches is necessarily suspended; but the guard there has, of course, to be furnished, and that is indeed hard work. We sent 100 men last night, 60 of whom had been on outpost the night before; so you see they do not spare flesh and blood. The consequences may be easily imagined: we are rapidly becoming as weak as we were before the draft came in—sad work! Half starved, half clothed, our few remaining men move about like gaunt spectres, heeding nothing, fearing nothing, and, I am ashamed to add, hoping nothing. But you must not think I am croaking; indeed I am not, I am merely telling you a few painful facts which if I were to conceal, seeing that not an hour of the day passes without their being brought most painfully under my notice, I should only be writing to you as a gazetteer, not as one who wishes to tell you all and everything that passes.

8th.— . . . We had yesterday 16 degrees of frost, and as the tents do not cause more than one degree difference

in the atmosphere you may imagine that the heat is not oppressive. I have a stove, but am obliged to be careful in burning charcoal as we have had more than one instance in the army of asphyxia from an imprudent use of it. I am also at last having my tent excavated which makes a difference.

12th.—In a weak moment I was rash enough to hope that I might have seen my name in the column of brevet-majors, for the same reason after Inkerman I had been led by others to expect it, or perhaps I should have never dreamt of such a thing. However, such was not to be the case, and God knows I have no reason to complain when I see you of the old army, and so many deserving ones of the new army, passed over.

. . . I see the papers have now taken to abusing the Staff and the Commander-in-chief out here. I suppose nothing will go right till we have the editor of the *Times* as generalissimo, with a staff of printers' devils. Our newspapers are Nicholas' best friends. . . .

I find *My Novel* a charming companion, and read about a dozen pages a day with intense interest. Those who live as I have lived the last year thinking of, and hearing nothing else, but warlike sounds and subjects, can alone understand the pleasure of lapsing unconsciously into civilization while reading so amusing a book.

Well, cheer up, I cannot help thinking the year '55 will see us united yet, notwithstanding the political horizon is dark. If not we must trust that He will direct all for the best and submit humbly to His will.

18th.— . . . To-day all the newspapers you sent poured in, and I have been reading and blessing (?) the infamous articles in the *Times*, particularly that of the 30th. So long as the Emperor has so powerful an ally as this horrid

newspaper, what need to him of legions and levies? It is quite impossible that the war can go on, as far as we are concerned, if this wholesale publication of private letters is to be permitted. And you excellent people have none to thank but yourselves! Every whipper-snapper ensign, who can spell decently, writes home of his discomforts and dirt (the greater part of which he probably has to thank himself for), and the family circle, after much weeping and admiration, decides on sending the precious document to the editor of the So-and-So gazette, substituting a fictitious name for that of the fighting ensign. And then the innocent public believe it all, and imagine a great deal more.

But apart from joking, much is exaggerated. That the sufferings of the army are very great as a body, and that these sufferings have been mainly caused by the want of foresight of those in power, both at home and abroad, is a painful and undeniable fact; but the annihilation and disorganization that is talked of, is simply untrue. Three parts of the men who have been sent away sick will reappear in the spring, please God, if we survive the winter, and they will be better soldiers than either your militia recruits or your German levies. . . .

Stories of all kinds are floating about the camp; we are told to expect some startling intelligence in a day or two. . Whether this refers to an intended recall of Lord Raglan, or to a cessation of hostilities, is a matter of speculation. The majority incline naturally towards the latter, as being most congenial to their wishes at this moment, I am not ashamed to own myself a member of the majority! At present, with our 11,000 effective men, we are but a contingent to the French, and if Sebastopol be taken, we can only be subordinate to them. This don't suit our ideas, nor will it be creditable to England. . . .

We are all so glad Jim Fergusson has been elected

for Ayrshire in place of poor Blair. He will do very well as an M.P.*

19th.— . . . The newspapers are worse than Prussia, for they positively do us harm, and give their facts so melancholy a tinge that Nicholas must chuckle while he reads the leading articles. The wholesale publication of letters is too bad; I find that one cannot be too cautious; I have heard, only within the last few days, that my letters sent to the Regimental Orderly Room [in London] have been thence forwarded to Windsor almost regularly. Heaven knows what treason I may not have scribbled while under the influence of indignation at the apathy and incapacity of the heads of departments. Fortunately none of my facts can be gainsayed; but "O that my enemy would write!" is a proverb not to be despised.

Thank God my health is excellent; would that I could say the same for my poor Grenadiers who have little but their stout hearts left.

Things, indeed, had come to a deplorable pass. About the third week in January the critical moment seemed to be reached when the existence of the Brigade of Guards as a fighting force seemed to be coming to an end. Acting temporarily as brigade-major, I carried the "state" of the Brigade to Headquarters, and it revealed the painful fact that the effectives of the three battalions did not number 800 men. Many were lying in camp, some in the hut hospital at Balaklava, a still larger number at Scutari. The arrival of one or two fresh regiments from England

* Captain and Lieut.-Col. James Hunter Blair, Scots Fusilier Guards, M.P., eldest son and heir of Sir David, third baronet of Blairquhan, having fallen in action at Inkerman, Capt. and Lieut.-Col. Sir James Fergusson of Killkerran, Grenadier Guards, was elected M.P. for Ayrshire while serving with the Grenadier Guards in the trenches.

and the Mediterranean enabled Lord Raglan to relieve us, and we transferred our camp to quiet and healthy ground in the immediate neighbourhood of Balaklava. Here, in an incredibly short time, thanks to the facility of obtaining fair supplies of food and rest from duties in the trenches, and the long exposure to the elements on the Inkerman plateau, our skeleton ranks soon regained, both in appearance and numbers, the efficiency which exposure, overwork, want of clothing, and insufficiency of food had gradually deprived them. These lines of Shakespeare's *Henry V.*, so aptly describe our condition at that time that I feel impelled to quote them—

“ We are but warriors for the working day,
Our gayness and our gilt are all besmirched
With rainy marching in the painful field.
There's not a piece of feather in our host
(Good argument I hope we shall not fly),
And time hath worn us into slovenry;
But, by the mass, our hearts are in the trim ! ”

Though I believe my letters expressed the indignation we had long felt at the confusion and absence of all system which prevailed at Balaklava—our only depôt for supplies—and general abuse of all the authorities from the Head-quarter Staff to the Commissariat clerk, I am now disposed to throw the blame not so much on the individuals as on the authorities at home and at Constantinople.* Dread

* It should be borne in mind that, at the outbreak of the war, the War Office and Colonial Office were administered by a single Secretary of State—the Duke of Newcastle. It was decided to separate them ; but this was not effected till July, 1855, some months after 25,000 troops had been sent out. The Duke, therefore, cannot be considered to have received a fair start, and this appears in the following extract from the *Report of the Sebastopol Committee* :—

“ On accepting the Secretaryship for War, he found himself in this

of responsibility seemed to pervade every department; medical stores and comforts, however urgently needed, could not be issued unless inspected by a "board"; in many instances perishable stores, which should have been landed at Scutari, were brought on to Balaklava, only to be restored to their proper destination after such a delay as rendered them unfit for the use or consumption of patients hovering between life and death.

Dreadful as were the scenes which occurred in the last month of 1854, the condition of affairs in the following month, both in the hospitals and depôts, were described long afterwards by a great statesman from his place in Parliament as "horrible and heartrending." But already there had been aroused in England an all-pervading sympathy. It would seem that all ranks of society vied with each other in despatching supplies of the most varied kind for distribution to their countrymen who were undergoing such terrible sufferings.

I wish that I could look back on a due display of activity or cordial appreciation of our condition by the Staff at Headquarters. Though his age and the strain of work which might have tried to the utmost the strength of a younger

disadvantageous position: he had no separate office for his Department, no document prescribing his new duties, no precedent for his guidance, and his under-secretaries were new to the work. . . . He was imperfectly acquainted with the best mode of exercising authority over the subordinate departments, and these departments were not officially informed of their relative position, or of their new duties towards the Minister for War. His interference was sought for in matters of detail, wherein his time should not have been occupied, and he was left unacquainted with transactions of which he should have received official cognizance."

In these circumstances it is indeed amazing that the confusion was not even more disastrous than we know it to have been.

man justified Lord Raglan's remaining in retirement, he was so rarely seen that the personal encouragement of the Commander-in-Chief amounted to a few carefully-expressed "general orders." Copies of his despatches after the battles of the Alma and Inkerman had reached us, and I am constrained to admit that in neither of these important records had the conduct of the Brigade of Guards been recorded in the terms of eulogy which the prominent part they took in each of those battles entitled them to expect. The measured language of the despatches was perused by us in silence, even the rank and file feeling just disappointment at the bare mention therein of their behaviour on those two momentous occasions. Neither the quartermaster-general nor the adjutant-general were ever seen except on flying visits, nor is it surprising that newspaper correspondents found plenty of material for scathing articles destined to fill the hearts of the English people with indignation and resentment against both the War Minister and the generals in the field. But I do not care to revert to these sad days and painful events which the lapse of years since has, I trust, effaced from the memory of the few survivors.

Camp before Sebastopol.

January 22nd, 1855.— . . . The snow and frost are gone for the present, and the mud is perfectly appalling, so sticky and deep is it. Nevertheless we have succeeded in erecting one of the huts which with incredible labour we transported hither piecemeal. It is a charming little *baraque*, and will be, I think, invaluable for our sick men. Would that we could get more of them up here!

Your letters of the 5th Jan., in common with those

that I see on all sides from other people, lead me to believe that you entirely mistake our feelings regarding the Inkerman dispatch. I assure you we never thought that our services would be underrated either by the Queen or yourselves; but a misstatement of facts, which that dispatch was undoubtedly guilty of, is always galling; still more so when we have reason to believe that the writer of the dispatch spoke in very different terms in his private letters. So do not imagine we are the least sore about not being sufficiently appreciated at home. . . .

Camp before Sebastopol.

26th.—. . . Your letters from Scotland arrived with as much regularity as the family packet, and I do not think I can have missed one. I am sorry to find that you imagine us discontented with the "faint praise" awarded us out *here*. It is, you know, the proper appreciation *at home* that we look to, and the opinion of those we care for, not of those who use us as a bad rider would a good hunter, pressing us when the pull should be taken and giving no thanks when the day is over. You are, indeed, right in bidding me to be cautious *what* I write and *of whom* I write. I am by no means sure that my letters to Hatton * have been treated in that confidential way that I could wish, and fear that a few allusions that I made to our late Brigadier (B.) and to the higher powers (the latter *not* by name) may have slipped out for general discussion and, of course, exaggeration. However, I have only stated what I can fully prove and what every officer of the Brigade can substantiate.

You ask me to tell you *all* I know and all I think, and I do not hesitate to do so. The whole thing is resolved into the one grand fault—we literally have no Commander-in-Chief. We have an excellent man, it is true, fully

* Regimental Adjutant of the Grenadier Guards in London.

capable as far as mental capabilities will go; but you know that that alone will not suffice, and that if the generalissimo will not blow up the division generals, the division generals will take the brigade-general's reports for granted, and the brigadiers will be satisfied with whatever reports the commanding officers of regiments may choose to give them; while all that personal inspection, without which no certainty of the proper attention having been paid to orders can be arrived at, is *entirely* and absolutely neglected. I have known our own young officers on outlying pickets say, "I wish to heaven some general officer would only come round and blow me up *well*, rather than be left here unvisited for twenty-four hours." In these few words you arrive at the root of the evil.

It is very true that Lord Raglan may not be able to keep the commissariat mules alive to provide fresh meat twice a week, roast coffee, or build huts; but the responsibility of the due performance of these duties must attach itself to some one. To whom, then, but the head? Not to be prosy, I might draw in a few words a comparison between his position and that of a C.O. of a regiment and an adjutant who wanted looking after. If the chief don't bully the adjutant, the regiment goes to the devil, as this army has. If Lord Raglan had only insisted on Estcourt and Airey and their subordinates riding daily round the divisions and pickets, abusing every one and *forcing* both men and officers to exert themselves, much—oh, how much! of all this misery might have been averted. But whenever these men have come here (and I can only speak of their visits to our Brigade), they actually required to be told what duties we performed, how we did them, and *where* we went! Nothing can be more gentlemanlike than their manners, mode of inquiry, and professions of good will, and apparent anxiety to benefit; but from the unfortunate fact that they none of them *seem* to know

anything of regimental system or duty, they reverse the positions of instructor and instructed. We are invited to make reports and suggestions to which, when made, not the smallest attention is paid. I could fill a volume with *facts* which would positively startle you, each of which would involve the reputation of any quarter-master or adjutant-general. The case of our unhappy Brigade is, as I before said, precisely that of "overdriving the willing horse." They know we are the last to complain; that both men and officers feel that they are intended to be an example to the army, and that they must keep up that example; and counting upon this feeling, which they know of just as well as *you* do, they (the chiefs) urge us to the point whence we can look only to annihilation. You will hardly believe me when I tell you that if we were turned out at this moment, the Brigade of Guards could not bring more than 750 effective men on parade; and yet we can get no assistance in fetching our huts up from the port, or any relief from the trenches. Even the very battalion horses, allowed to every regiment here, are denied to us and no reason given; so that I do most positively assure you that everything that is brought up from Balaklava in the way of buildings, fuel, comforts for the sick, and clothing for the healthy, bedding for the hospital, and rice and vegetables for the battalion, is brought on horses the *private* property of the officers, laden and led by men of the regiment. If we did not do this and many other things besides, the men must rot. We have 130 sick, and the commissariat allowance of fresh meat for the hospital daily is seldom more than fifteen pounds. Now salt meat, which the men get generally, is inadmissible into hospitals where dysentery and low fever prevail, so we have to *buy* sheep in order that each man under the surgeon's hands may have his mess of soup, etc. *Aide toi, et Dieu t'aidera*, becomes daily a maxim of greater meaning; and our greatest pleasure now is to go round the hospital and

see that, thanks to *private* exertions, the men who should be the general's greatest care are properly attended to.

But there is much to be said with regard to our army on the other side of this gloomy picture. The main cause of all our difficulties and delays in bombarding and taking this horrid city was undoubtedly the failure of the French batteries on the day the fire first opened. During the three weeks of preparation, both armies had strained their utmost to bring up supplies of shot and shell adequate to the demand they knew would be made when the fire opened. No sooner, however, did the fire open, than the French batteries proved themselves to be so badly constructed, so weak, and so ill-engineered that their guns were *silenced*; and they implored *us* to keep up an incessant fire in order to distract the Russians while they repaired and altered their flimsy earthworks. Well, the result may be easily conjectured. At the end of three days the French report themselves ready for work again. In the meanwhile, our incessant fire had so reduced our store of ammunition that we have never been able fully to complete it; while the French who, during their repairs, never fired a shot, have always had their original stock to draw upon, which a moderate replenishment suffices to keep up. Of course we were obliged to keep pace, so the commissariat mules were laid hold of to bring up shot and shell during the time the weather was so bad, and here again the consequences may be imagined. The mules die of exhaustion; there are none to replace them. Fatigue parties have to be sent into Balaklava to fetch the rations for the regiments; men are employed on this duty who have been the whole previous night in the trenches; *of course* they knock up; the hospitals fill; the surgeons demand medical stores and comforts; there is no transport; the sick require removal to shipboard; the clothing arrives at last at Balaklava, the quartermaster-general gives each regiment an order for its quota with the remark, "You

must fetch it yourself for there is no transport." However, you see, the French mishap brought all this upon us, so Lord R. is only partially to blame.

Again, the ships sent from England were laden in such a queer way, shot and shell piled on shirts and shoes, mortars mixed with medicines, huts with howitzers; and whereas the port of Balaklava will barely hold thirty vessels, with an extent of quay equal to about one side of Wilton Crescent, you will understand how difficult it must be to land these different things, particularly when no men can be spared for these fatigue duties.

Look, then, at these *contretemps*—at the fearfully extended front we have to defend—at the state of disease in which the original army landed in the Crimea, and which our overwork has never given us leisure to tackle, and you will have at a glance the reasons for the tissue of misfortunes that our leaders have not been men enough to oppose.

As for the French, the secret of their success lies in their never attempting anything without due preparation. They land their regiments; but never dream of employing them in arduous duties, such as trench work or redoubt making, until they are *bien installés*. Their numbers enable them to do this completely before they draw upon their reinforcements; whereas we, having landed without a reserve, are obliged to shove each wretched regiment as fast as it arrives into the batteries, regardless of the consequences.

You have now my ideas on our campaign such as they are worth. They may be ill-expressed, but I believe that the sensible men of this army, who have watched its progress from the date of its leaving England, will fully agree in all I have said. What distresses me most is to see that there is no prospect of ultimate improvement, and that, if these rumours of peace which are now tickling our ears are true, and war for a time should cease, the

same blunders would be committed in dispatching and organizing any future expedition should John Bull be such a fool as to *se mêler* in anything of the sort. I hope I have spoken out sufficiently now for you, my dear father, and if these observations are of any use in enabling you to form a correct opinion on our deeds and misdeeds, I shall be only too much gratified. When I see the fearful nonsense that is written in the papers, I am ready to tear my hair with impotent rage, for these vile calumnies point direct at individuals as the authors of evils, *which one great system of ignorance has alone caused.*

1st February.—. . . The weather is changing again and rain has succeeded frost and snow. Whether this will last and the severity of the winter is to be considered over remains to be seen, but certainly we cannot complain of cold. My double tent, sunk $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet to the rock and heated by a stove, is really at times too warm, and though it is now near midnight, and the rain is falling in torrents, I am sitting in only a woollen jacket . . . I do not allude much to our men, for I can say nothing but what is as painful for you to hear as for me to write: the supplies and benefactions from England come like a Madeira climate to a victim of consumption: they will prolong our existence a trifle longer, but the mischief is too deep-seated for any remedy save that which it would be unsoldier-like for me to suggest. . . .

5th.—. . . Winter has not taken his departure yet, but is determined to give us a shake of his mantle till the last moment. Consequently snow and frost are again in full force, and siege operations proportionately retarded . . .

The Queen has sent us all mittens, etc., the work of her royal fingers and those of the maids of honour. Were not the days of chivalry past, we should bind these *gages* to the points of our lances, and challenge our opponents

like Paladin of old. However, we really are sensible of the high honour she has done us. Lord Rokeby,* our new General, gave a long account of an interview he had had with Her Majesty before he left. He is dreadfully cut up at the skeleton appearance we present, and could hardly believe it.

I am quite ashamed of Evans' letters, for there is no denying he was the best of the bunch of generals out here.†

9th.—. . . We are, of course, anxious about the Ministry. As yet we know nothing except what is announced by telegraph—that the resignation of Lord Aberdeen has been accepted and Lord Derby sent for. . . . I hope to hear that Lord Palmerston is War Minister, and that some active man like James Lindsay is Surveyor or Secretary for the Ordnance. We may then have some hope that the truth will be spoken, and proper remedies provided for the evils that imbecility and ignorance have allowed to annihilate the most magnificent army that ever the world saw. By proper management, and a total change of organization, I firmly believe that by next May we might take the field in quite as effective a state as our allies, whose system, good as it is, has defects which they wisely keep to themselves, and which only by inquiry can be ascertained. Their hospitals in comparison to ours are very dens of filth, and you must never believe their returns of sick, etc., which are suppressed and garbled to a very great extent. They laugh much at us about the Balaklava affair, and say that these sort of things "*chez nous s'appellent des victoires, quoique peut-être les résultats ne méritent pas le nom de succès!*"

* Sixth and last Lord Rokeby, served in the Third Guards at Quatre Bras and Waterloo. Died in 1888.

† General Sir George de Lacy Evans, G.C.B., Radical M.P. for Westminster. Commanded Spanish Legion against the Carlists, 1835-37, and the Second Division at the battle of Alma. Died in 1870.

However, I see now that you are determined to rank it with Alma and Inkerman, and that my Crimea medal will have three clasps.

Lord Rokeby is now in command, and is evidently fully bent on rescuing from annihilation the remnant of our Brigade. The move to Balaklava (which is in contemplation) entirely originates with him, and I have no doubt it will take place, though not for ten days or so. By this means, and a cessation from night duty, I have great hopes we may save enough to form a rallying point for the Young Guard to form upon. As to ever having such a Brigade again as we started with, that is hopeless; but, then, if you will shove your reserve troops always to the front, what must you expect? I fear you think I grow bitter at times. I assure you I do not mean to be so, but I cannot affect indifference to the sight of what I must regard as my dear old battalion melting away, added to the consciousness that no militia recruits or volunteers can ever fill the places where these fine old soldiers stood . . . I hear our new uniform is to be a most gorgeous business; is that true? I can only say that, if so, I shall wait till (D.V.) I return home, as my daily costume is of the very roughest order, and only on Sundays and for parades do I put on either red or blue coat, unless, indeed, I am going to pay a visit to my Zouave friends, who are awfully scandalized at the indifference to costume exhibited by *la Garde*. Talking of *la Garde*, I have not yet seen the newly arrived *Garde Imperiale*, but the Zouaves laugh much at them, and affect to hold them cheap.

12th.— . . . One of the principal desiderata in the army is soda for washing: I have tried everywhere and can get none. If you hear of any Crimean Army Fund ships starting, a supply would be much appreciated. The water is so hard that soap won't do without the soda.

16th.— . . . I am sorry an impression should have got

abroad that the men of this army have lost all (outward at least) respect for their officers. Of course I cannot speak of other Brigades as I can of my own; but I do not believe there is more truth in it than this—when a man is ill-clothed, ill-fed, overworked, and in a state of chronic disease, how can you expect he will keep his soldierlike appearance, attitude, or habits? Will he each time he passes an officer spring up and salute, or jump aside if in the way? Why, an officer would be a brute to exact such empty compliments on a service like ours at this moment! As for our own men, I do most solemnly declare that I never till now felt what the chain was that unites men and officers, and as scarce a half hour of the day passes without my being in their tents, kitchens, or hospitals, I may be considered without affectation an authority.

We have, I assure you, at this moment but one grievance, and that is the excessive hard work and exposure to which our men, already so enfeebled, are subjected. Anyone who has passed a day or a night in the trenches knows that it is not by any means the same thing as passing the same number of hours on an outlying picket, out of sight or shot of the enemy. Shells and bullets whizzing in disagreeable proximity keep the body and mind on full stretch, and the men return, without many casualties it is true, but so beat that rest is all they care for. We really manage to feed them well now, thanks to our own exertions, not to the Commissariat, and could the exigencies of the siege allow of our getting only a fair share of the rest enjoyed by the French regiments, shouldn't we show well against them? Why only to-day at our morning parade (for the men had returned at nine o'clock last night from the trenches) some French officers who had just arrived with General de Monnayes' Division were quite astonished at our appearance. "La propreté" and "l'immobilité" was what they said struck them so much; and this is what the *Times* calls disorganization!

I fear our numbers are fearfully small, but the work accounts for that, and so much the more credit is due to the remnant that is left for keeping up a good appearance and showing so good an example.

I have not read all the late papers which inundate our camp, but really that attack of Sidney Herbert's on colonels of regiments for not understanding brigade work is the most painfully absurd exposure of his own ignorance that he could have been guilty of. A brigadier is but a vehicle; he cannot order even a commissariat clerk to furnish an extra ration, and is so great a nonentity (save in the field of battle) that many colonels would prefer remaining with their regiments to commanding a brigade. As to the regimental officers, I leave their case in your hands. There can be no doubt they have been the mainstay of this army.

I do not know just now of anything that it would be advisable to send for the men. Split peas, tea, pepper, mustard, and sugar, oatmeal, barley, butter, and vinegar, are the essentials for keeping up their health besides their rations and the vegetables which the Commissariat must provide. A steady and sure supply of these things at a low price would be desirable, and I think it will be done.

The railway is really advancing.* Probably it will be in full swing when the town falls.

We are still at the front, as you see, but our move to Balaklava is decided on. The people at headquarters have done their best to get us to beg for this change, but we always answer, "It is for you to order what you think best, not for us to choose our quarters!" Did the Duke in your time give brigades the choice of "the front" or Lisbon? Rokeby means well, but his nerve fails him. Knollys † would have been our man.

* From the base at Balaklava to the front.

† Major-General (Sir) William Knollys, was at that time organizing the new camp of Aldershot. He was afterwards (1862-77) Treasurer and Comptroller of the Household to the Prince of Wales.

18th.— . . . The Russians attacked Omar Pasha and his Turks at Eupatoria in considerable force, and got a jolly good licking, with the loss of nearly 400 killed. Whether this success produces any great result in a strategic point of view is a matter of doubt, but it is of great importance as having raised the morale and reputation of the Turkish troops, which had fallen very low. . . .

. . . I should not be sorry if our generals of division and brigade took a hint in time and visited hospitals and trenches a little more than they do. The French are very sharp at detecting the weak points of their generals; there is no saying but our fellows may at last become equally so.

You will rejoice to hear that we are blessed at length with dry, and not very cold, weather. The consequences have been quite enlivening; our survivors are as brisk as kittens, and it is really a pleasure to have a parade and see how clean they turn out. Would that those who are gone could reappear like the crocuses, which are actually rearing their delicate little heads round our tents, in mockery at the round shots which are rusting alongside them.

We and the Zouaves continue the best of friends. One of the lieutenants makes me his principal ally: he rose from the ranks, and his father, I suspect, was a respectable *épiciier*; but he is the soul of honour and good humour. While he does not scruple to borrow *en bon camarade* my saddles, bridles, etc., he never fails in doing some little thing to oblige one of us, or to wipe off the score. This is the only solution in the matter, as one cannot send him a present worth accepting for fear of the poor fellow committing some horrid extravagance in return. They are certainly the most wonderful creatures, these Zouaves. Always living in tents they are as much at home in the open as if in a city, and, such is their quickness and intelligence, that there is literally no luxury short of

armchairs and Turkey carpets their officers do not enjoy. Imagine my dining with this fellow, he being only a lieutenant whose pay amounts to 130 francs a month. I assure you the dinner was far better than any I have ever seen at the table of our general officers, though the materials were scanty and indifferent. I had sent him a N. Wiltshire cheese some time ago which was immensely appreciated. One of our dishes the other night was the shell of this cheese enclosed in a case of batter to make it look pretty, the interior being filled with macaroni, into which the remaining flavour of the cheese had been transferred by the cheese shell being used instead of the *casserolette*!

Their colonel, Cler, is a very good specimen of a Frenchman and a great ally with us all. Lord Rokeby gave him a pair of the mittens which her Majesty had sent out for the Brigade, and he is greatly pleased.

22nd.— . . . I closed my letter about ten o'clock at night, and turned out into the open air, just to see what sort of a night it was. A soft southerly breeze scarce reminded me that I had but one jacket on, and on re-entering my tent, I looked at my fur boots as much as to say—*you*, at least, may consider yourselves laid up in ordinary for many a long month. Imagine my astonishment when I again turned out at a quarter before four a.m. to parade men for the trenches, to find the wind blowing briskly from the north, while a snowcloud or *poudré* was positively blinding every one. Then followed perhaps the severest day we have yet had. The thermometer certainly never fell below 16°, but the wind and driving snow combined to make the scene as wearisome as Old Nick himself could have wished. Added to our other *agréments*, the French got up a shave that the Russians had orders to attack us in a *tourmente* of snow; so we were by way of being on the alert all day, as if a snowstorm

was not just as disagreeable to an attacking as a defending army! However, thanks to a provident supply of fuel and plenty of good food, our poor lads were but little the worse, though their noses were uncommonly blue as they returned from the trenches. This may give you some idea of what an extraordinary climate this is.

I cannot say that the alterations have produced any ill effects upon me hitherto. I am sometimes quite startled at the sensation of perfect health, a luxury to which I for many years have been a stranger; and how can I, with this sensation strong upon me at this moment, presume to grumble at being here? On the contrary, I am not half grateful enough for this marvellous blessing. . . .

I have great hopes that we may yet have a decent Brigade ready by the spring; the materials that are left will form a good nucleus to train the young ones upon.

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CHAPTER XIII

THE SIEGE CONTINUED

February—May, 1855

ON 23rd February the 3rd Battalion quitted the position we had occupied for five trying months. The band of the 2^{ème} Zouaves played us off on our march to Balaklava, where our men were to be housed in huts, and we officers in tents on the side of the North Hill, much like the side of a house.

Balaklava.

26th February.— . . . The night after we left the front, our friends the 2^{ème} Zouaves, supported by a battalion of Infanterie de Marine (a sort of colonial corps), tried to seize upon a certain hill on the right of Gordon's attack, the possession of which is necessary for the approach to the Tour Malakoff. The Russians appear to have had information of their intentions, for at least 5000 men were waiting to oppose the French. The attack was made, and the Zouaves displayed, as usual, the greatest gallantry, drove the Russians from their half-made entrenchment, but could not hold their advantage; for their support, instead of following them up, had retired. After fighting desperately for about twenty minutes, the Zouaves were obliged to retire with the loss of 17 officers and 200 men *hors de combat*!

This is an unlucky business no doubt. The French, as usual, make the best of it; and the account you will probably read of it in the *Moniteur* will speak of it as a

reconnaissance in force which, after fulfilling its object of clearing the hill, was withdrawn, not without some loss. Next time the French will be supported by an English division. You will hear of a different result !

As our ranks were gradually filled by the return of convalescents we took our share with the Highland Brigade in the trenches, which protected the port of Balaklava from any sudden attack, and between three and four every morning the Brigade marched across the valley and joined the Highlanders, prepared to repel any attack on their exposed position.

Balaklava.

2nd March, 1855.— . . . I cannot say I am much gratified by our move down hither, and I doubt the results proving very beneficial. I am told, too, that ill-natured people are already making remarks upon our moving away from the front, forgetting that we have been in the most exposed position of the whole army for five months. Sir Colin Campbell was last night in orders as commanding the 1st Division, so we are now under his orders entirely.* He is a fine soldier ; but I fear he has a prejudice in favour of the bonnet and against the bearskin ! Rokeby is all very well for England ; but he is not up to the mark here. I think the letter abusing him for deafness and blindness shameful. Deaf he is certainly, to some extent, but he can hear when he chooses, and his eyesight is a precious sight better than mine. But he is not practical enough for the rough work necessary to re-establish the Brigade. Our reports from Scutari are not cheering, I fear but few of our men will return to us in the spring : their constitutions appear to have been completely sapped.

I positively believe I am growing fat ; I am sure the

* Created Lord Clyde in 1858 ; appointed Field-Marshal 1862 ; died in 1868.

men are! You will be surprised to hear it perhaps, but it is no less true: they get better food, and more of it, now than they get in England, as we provide it for them. I only yesterday brought from Lord Blantyre's ship 350 gallons of Prestonpans ale, which is pronounced to be best and cheapest drink at 6*d.* a quart that they "never knowed." By buying thus *en gros* one can get things very cheap indeed, and thus sell them at our regimental shop in detail. . . . We are all wearing to-day Prince Albert's coats, which really are beautiful, a right royal present I must say.

5th March.— . . . I think I may fairly pronounce the back of old winter to be broken. The sun is shining so gloriously at this moment that I cannot believe the snow or cold winds can have a chance of gaining the day: the blue gentians, or whatever they are that I enclose, were plucked by me half an hour ago, while I was superintending the sinking of an old beer barrel in the side of the hill to form a well or reservoir for our new cantonment. . . .

. . . The change of abode has already wrought wonders among our men. I assure you the main guard of the garrison, which I have just marched off, would have done no discredit to the Colour Court at St. James's. . . .

Three thousand more English troops would render Balaklava impregnable; as it is we can just hold it and that is all. . . .

Were the railway finished my mind would be more easy, as then the supply of shot and shell would be almost unlimited; but the "rail" is not popular at Headquarters, and in truth we have not men to spare to work on the roads. Even then I do not see our way I confess. Thoroughly to subdue the Crimea, we must have at least 100,000 more men there, part of which force must be mobile, to be employed at first in flying columns, until we can get well at the enemy. *Le jeu, vaut-il la chandelle?*

Having thus given you my "croaking" view, as you will perhaps call it, of affairs, I will turn to pleasanter ones. To begin with, I will just allude to one which, after all, is but a thing that *might* happen, not certain by any means; at any rate, what *has* happened gratifies me, inasmuch as it will please you. It appears that a brevet majority or some distinction or other is to be given to two captains in each regiment engaged in the early part of the campaign. Our captain being a lieutenant,* Lord Rokeby has obtained permission from Lord Raglan to recommend lieutenants and captains of the Guards. Of our regiment my name and Cameron's† have been sent in; so perhaps (I only say perhaps, as I really know no more than that I have been recommended) in a month or six weeks I may have earned the somewhat antiquated title of Major. *Ce sera beau!* if the little words "for conduct in the field" are added, and all I hope is that it will give you pleasure, supposing it comes off.

Balaklava.

March 9th, 1855.—We are all, as you may imagine, agog at a report which comes from, and is believed at, both Headquarters, English and French, that old Nick has at last "gone to his place."‡ Now this is startling, if true; and, be the result what it may, we cannot well be the worse for it. It is, however, absurd to speculate on so large a field; so I have made up my mind to take the thing quietly.

Meanwhile we are steadily improving, both in efficiency and in the strength of our position; so that I doubt old Liprandi doing us much harm, even though he bring 30,000 or 40,000 men to back him up. The railroad,

* Lieutenants in the Brigade of Guards held, at that time, the honorary rank of captain, and captain held that of lieutenant-colonel.

† Afterwards Sir William Cameron, Commander-in-chief at the Cape.

‡ The Emperor Nicholas I. died on 2nd March, 1855.

though not advancing rapidly, is of very great use already. Only this very morning I got three trucks lent me by Mr. Beattie, the chief engineer, by which means I transported the materials of three huts to a point whence we could easily make our baggage animals drag them up the hill.

As for the accounts from England, they are quite serio-comic. On military subjects you are all gone stark, staring mad! The idea of sending out civilians to superintend each department, and dilettanti generals to anomalous positions! The whole Commission of Sewers had better come to show us how to keep our camps clean and bury dead horses: as if we didn't know already, there being only one trifling deficiency—the men to do the work. Perhaps, however, these gentlemen propose bringing their own picks and shovels, and by personal example enforce attention to the sanitary regulations. The whole thing from beginning to end is a *do*. You will see these learned men will report everything as surprisingly well managed. No wonder, everything is so now—comparatively speaking. Balaklava is clean, boasts a police, scavengers, harbour masters, sign posts and names on all public offices, besides a stern Provost Marshal who treats all alike, be they navvies or Turks. Plenty of mules and ponies have arrived and are daily arriving; so the transport is accomplished with facility and without fatigue to the men. Provisions are plentiful and clothing abundant: and this is what these committee people will see and report accordingly. Not a word will be said of the misery and starvation which preceded all this; and the authors of that will be whitewashed.

I cannot imagine that the French Emperor would be such a fool as to come here: * if he does it will prove that

* The Emperor of the French had struck dismay into the British Government by announcing to Lord Palmerston his intention of going in person to the seat of war and assuming command-in-chief of the Allied Forces—"the only way," he considered, "to bring to a rapid conclusion

his army is more disorganized than I already take it to be. Believe me there is much very bad in the French system ; but they keep it very dark, and assume a confidence that they do not possess.

12th March.— . . . I read the *Times*, as you do, stopping every now and then for a jolly good execration at the writers and newsmongers that mangle their neighbours' reputations. We want an iron-fisted general who will stand no nonsense, but insist on everyone lending a shoulder to the wheel.

. . . The men have better food than they would get in England, and are fully aware of the fact. Poor fellows, they are as merry as grigs again, and work hard at hut-building and other fatigues the whole day without a murmur. You will be glad to hear the "Grannies" get all the *kudos* ; Rokeby publicly held them up as a pattern to t'others : this strictly *entre nous*.

St. Leger Glyn and Jervis Smith started for England yesterday. They will report your son as very well, very brown, very hairy, and very dictatorial I fear, for I am at someone all day long. . . .

16th.— . . . I picked up your packet of the 2nd March yesterday at Lord Raglan's, whither I had gone with Armitage, the fresco painter, *en route* to Inkerman, where we were to choose the ground for his great historical painting. He seems to like the idea of our "Colours Surrounded." . . .

. . . Poor Armitage yesterday was in a horrid fright. We were riding away from Inkerman through the 49th

an expedition which otherwise must result in disaster to England as well as to France." Lord Clarendon, who was then Foreign Secretary, went to Paris on 8rd March to dissuade the Emperor from so undesirable a course. He succeeded in doing so, although the Emperor never made any announcement that he had abandoned the project.

camp (Second Division) when a beastly Russian battery, the other side of the Tchernaya, chose to fire a 32-pound shot which whizzed quite near enough to be disagreeable and went bang into the hospital hut of the 62nd; without, however, doing much damage. I rode up to enquire about it, when bang went another, whizzed about ten yards over the poor painter's head and tore up the ground a few paces from him! It was impossible to help laughing at his expression of surprise, and we were uncommonly glad to canter away before a third visitor, which he swore he saw coming at him like a great cricket ball, could reach us. It turned out that these were intended for the French picket below the hill, but were badly aimed. They seldom if ever fire at the camp or huts, which is lucky, as the whole of the Second Division is well under range.

I saw General Simpson two days ago; he was very civil and spoke of having seen you just before he sailed. I do not envy him his post, and I suspect he himself is at a loss to know what he came for! The weather being fine everything looks bright, and as most of the regiments have got new clothing, etc., etc., the general appearance of the army quite belies the stories told of it three months ago.*

* The Duke of Newcastle having resigned the seals of the War Office, Lord Panmure had been appointed his successor. He immediately sent out General Simpson to report on the condition of the army, camps, etc. But Simpson, having been sent out to curse, had nothing but blessing both for the system and the personnel at the front. "The result," he wrote, "of my observations since coming here is that we are in a *regular fix*! It is impossible, my lord, that any military man of experience could have recommended the descent of this army in the Crimea, and *whoever* has ordered this expedition has much to answer for. . . . Lord Raglan is in perfect health and spirits, and how he goes through all he does is wonderful. . . . It is grievous to see, in the midst of the very serious operations at present demanding constant attention [the eighteen days' bombardment of April, 1855, was in progress], a huge bag of letters, *twice* a week per mail, laid on his table . . . quite sufficient to occupy *entirely* the mind of any man who has nothing else to think of. . . . The

23rd.— . . . Little has happened since I last wrote, save that the siege is being pushed with great vigour and the enemy display a surprising obstinacy and resource. For instance, last night they made a sortie and were not repulsed except with severe loss both to ourselves and the French. Captain Cavendish Broune of the 7th, Captain Vicars of the 97th,* and a Captain or Lieutenant Jordan were killed; Major Gordon of the Engineers severely wounded, but not dangerously I am told. I have not heard our exact loss in men, but I imagine it must have been considerable. The French, who are now using their *Garde* in the trenches, behaved very well indeed and made no mistake this time in driving the Russians back. Still this state of affairs cannot go on, and a crisis must be at hand. I still adhere to my opinion that Eupatoria is our legitimate base if we intend to capture the place. If bombardment alone is thought sufficient, we can perhaps do that as we now are and render the town untenable. Much depends on the morale of the Russian army. . . .

The peace "shave" has worn itself out, and the army seems to have made up its mind that it is not to be suffered to return till Sebastopol is in ashes. You know my opinion about this. If you will have Sebastopol, you must pay a heavy bill for the treat, and when you have got it you will find it valueless. In the meanwhile you may count on us.

state of our camps is another subject for misrepresentation at home. I know them all pretty well now, and more cleanly encampments I never saw. There is not a staff officer in the army with whom I have not had intercourse, in order to see and judge what sort of men they are. . . . There is not one of these incompetent: on the contrary, they are nearly all of them men of good attainments and good officers. I am confident in the correctness of my opinion, and it is but just to these officers that I should declare it, for *I came among them with considerable prejudice against them.*"

* Capt. Hedley Vicars, well known for his evangelical work in the army. He was, besides, a capable and gallant officer. In his last engagement, he cut down two men with his own hand before he fell.

They may talk as much as they like about recalling us, but do you imagine we should suffer such a thing for a moment? We are slowly recovering our strength, though not our numbers. Our morning state (the Grenadiers) this day returns 230 present fit for duty; this is exclusive of a detachment of 47 at a village hard by making gabions, of 50 employed as muleteers, and of about 50, perhaps more, employed in various staff duties. Thus you see we have 350 rank and file besides officers and lieutenants in my regiment alone. The Fusiliers have about 290. The Coldstream have not, I believe, altogether 150. Still we are a good little force, and if you will send us soon a few good men we may be a very respectable Brigade. . . .

We kept the day of humiliation here last Wednesday. No work was done, and we had divine service and an appropriate sermon from our chaplain, Mr. Egan. It is, however, impossible to make the men feel the importance or real meaning of such sermons, there is so much always taking place around them to distract the attention and smother thought. I took a long walk over the hills to the Monastery of St. George, and watched the old patriarchs answering the summons of the convent bell.

26th.— . . . You will see by the dispatches that the fighting in the trenches is severe and frequent. The French lost 220 killed a few nights ago, and the Russians full 600 left on the field. There was a truce for three hours on the following day, according to custom. English, French, and Russians fraternized and laughed with each other on the spot where a few hours before they were engaged in deadly strife. "A la guerre comme à la guerre!" . . .

Bentinck says we lost 100 men in Bulgaria: I know that the Brigade left dead and sick in Bulgaria 496. Of the latter not the odd 96 have ever joined since. So much for evidence. He said the men disliked the bearskin cap.

How is it we have never had a case of one being thrown away? Our fellows would as soon throw away their arms.

28th.— . . . Sir Colin Campbell told me two days ago that General Vinoy,* who commands the French brigade which is our support (*i.e.* the nearest corps to Balaklava), was at the front the other day during the truce for the burial of the slain, and that he had a friendly conversation with the very Russian general who had commanded the sortie. The latter said that neither he nor his men had had any notice of the intended movement until half-past two the same morning, when they were roused out, marched down from the camp to the north side of the harbour, taken across in steamers, *well primed with cognac*, and then told that they were to attack the English. The attack would have been an utter failure had the officer in command of our trenches kept his men in their places, but he (Colonel Kelly, 34th) went to the assistance of the French, who were attacked first, and so left an opening for the enemy to attack us, which they did next. However, I blame no officer in the trenches: both men and officers have been from the very first sent into the trenches without instructions of any kind, except to hold their own; no rules for the distribution of the covering parties, posting of sentries, or placing of reserves have ever been vouchsafed, and all that is told to the officer to whom a whole "siege attack," including battery, trench, zigzag and advanced work is given, is that so many men are to go to one, so many to another.

29th.— . . . You will hear much of our enormous mortars—28.13-inch mortars! This sounds formidable; unluckily the Woolwich authorities forget that shells cannot be fired without fuses, and consequently these important things are not forthcoming in sufficient quantity, but rot

* Military Governor of Paris during the siege in 1870-1.

peacefully at Woolwich Arsenal; while those that we do use date back to 1804. The gunners prefer the shells of 1804 to those of 1854. It is true I assure you. In consequence of this the siege train have to borrow fuses from the field train; so that in proportion as the efficiency of one increases, that of the other diminishes!

I have read the Duke of C.'s evidence, it is very fair and very gentlemanlike, and he speaks well as to facts, which is more than Bentinck did. They could not have chosen a worse man to examine than Sergeant Dawson: Sergeant Hill must have arrived by this time. He is the man to examine: his revelations as to the Commissariat might be curious and instructive. What is all this quinine row about? I asked our surgeon the other day, and he roared at the idea of fresh supplies of it coming out. We have heaps.

. . . The mortality at Scutari is appalling, there is no other word. We are to receive back about 40 men fit for Crimea service: all that remain out of full 600 sent sick and wounded to that plague-smitten spot. Duke George says that our men suffered in Bulgaria from the deprivation of porter; he should have added houses, beds, pot-houses, and the low comforts of a London life, from which this transition to "life in the Bush" was too sudden. Such will ever be the case as long as our authorities persist in keeping our men in London up to the last moment.

From Col. C. W. Ridley to General George Powell Higginson.

Balaklava, 5th April, 1855.

MY DEAR GENERAL,—

I have two reasons for writing to you. The first, to congratulate yourself on getting a regiment,* a reward for past services, which perhaps might have been given

* General Higginson had been given the colonelcy of the 94th Regiment.

earlier, but in these days one can only say "better late than never"; and I was very glad to hear of it. My second reason is to congratulate you on your son getting a majority, which I hope to see in the next *Gazette* that reaches us, to date from the 5th November. He was good enough on hearing from you that his name had gone in to come over and thank me, when in reality I deserve no thanks. Lord Rokeby asked me whom I meant to recommend besides Cameron, as he concluded of course he would be one. I had no hesitation in naming your son, for I most conscientiously thought that even had he been much lower in the lieutenants than he is, he had fairly earned his title to promotion, not only as having been adjutant to the battalion during the whole period it had been on service, been present with it both at Alma and Inkerman, but throughout the whole of our trying months this last winter, he was always at work for the good of the men and the welfare and credit of his battalion.

Major George Higginson, Grenadier Guards, to his father.

Camp near Balaklava.

21st April.— . . . It is just 4 a.m. . . . Clark, arrayed in belt and bearskin, has just come in with my matutinal tin cup of chocolate, which I always imbibe by way of stop gap in case of accidents. The Turks are playing their dismal réveillé, regiment after regiment repeating it till the last bugle sound is lost on the distant hill. Nearer to us, the French *clairons* are rousing up the brigade of General Vinoy with most cheery sounds, and a Highland pipe is droning away opposite to us most dolefully . . .

The Light Division sent 600 men the night before last and took some rifle pits which have been worrying the French army for weeks and weeks. The struggle was obstinate, and our success was dearly bought by the loss of Colonel Egerton of the 77th, and three other officers

severely wounded. I expect to hear that something was done last night also, as the firing was very heavy and sustained.

As to the bombardment, you will of course have heard that it has proved, as I anticipated, a failure. Lord R. proposed the assault twice on the tenth day of the firing, but the French were not ready! The opportunity is thus lost. Our only game now, if the struggle is to be protracted, is to commence *de novo* with a new base, and invest the north side. This will be a six months' affair and entail vast additions to our force, the materials of which, if I am to judge from what I read of the state of the Militia regiments, England is not likely to furnish. . . .

22nd.— . . . Omar Pacha has taken half of his Turks back to Eupatoria, as the services of so large a body of men will no longer be necessary here, and they will be in readiness at Eupatoria for a movement inland, in case such a thing should be thought of. I saw six of his regiments at drill as two brigades the other day, and can speak most positively that no six French or English regiments could move with greater if equal precision than these unbelievers.

At the front we have been pushing on the works up to the very verge of assault, and our Light Division have been showing our allies the way to take and hold rifle pits, to the extreme surprise and indignation of the said allies, who think us mad for attempting with 600 men (and succeeding) an attack that they have thrice *manqué* with 1500. But it is the old story over again!

27th.— . . . I am curious to learn how the Imperial guests were received.* I have not a doubt that our bombardment was so timed that the news of its result

* The Emperor and Empress of the French arrived on 16th April on a visit to Queen Victoria at Windsor.

might reach England at the moment that the Emperor was there, so that the *éclat* of success might be shared by the two nations in a becoming triumph. But whereas the account of the ten days' hammering offers but little subject of congratulation, this *coup-de-théâtre* has proved a failure. We are, however, to begin again on Monday, I hear, and then there must be some result, as it is morally impossible we can remain as we are. . . .

Camp, Southern Heights above Balaklava.

May 5th, 1855.—You see we have moved southwards, and now we occupy the huts and tents of the 42nd Highlanders, which regiment, together with the 71st and 93rd, formed part of the force that started on a "secret" expedition the day before yesterday. They are gone in steamers somewhere, but I really cannot say whither, the betting is in favour of Kertch, and that is the probable destination, though I have always inclined towards the idea that an advance from Eupatoria on Simpheropol was intended. At any rate the Highlanders received a few hours' notice only, and we (the Grenadiers) of course had only a corresponding time given us to start across the valley and take up this new and important position. We were naturally not pleased, as our camp on the North height was the admiration of every one. We had built huts, stables, gardens, etc., and also made every preparation for the reception of the draft from England which came into harbour just as we got the order to move. You can therefore understand that the last two days have been anything but days of rest, for the "new boys" only met us as we came to our new ground, and had to be put into their places and told off to stations in the trenches, or rather against the parapets, before evening. In addition to this Ridley* found himself all at once

* Col. Charles Ridley, second son of Sir Matthew White Ridley, third baronet. Died in 1869.

in command of all the troops on the upper heights, a trifle of 3000 English and as many Bono Johnnies. I of course am brigade major, and have to collect the returns from these different corps, which consist of Marines, the resuscitated relics of the 63rd, the 79th Highlanders, Artillery, both foot and marine. However, this will not last, and though perhaps we may not go back to our old ground again, still I expect that in the course of a week or ten days the 42nd and the other regiments will return, and we shall regain our Brigade.

The draft are a much finer set of fellows than I expected, and I hope soon to be able to show a fine body of men. I devoted all yesterday to ablutions, and this morning have had them at drill a couple of hours in the plain, to the delight of the Cossack sentry on Canrobert's Hill.

Your letters of the 20th with their inclosures and long accounts of the Emperor's visit were most acceptable. It seems to have been an ovation from beginning to end.

May 7th.— . . . The recall of this expedition to Kaffa has filled us all with consternation. I cannot pretend to tell you the whys and the wherefores; all I know is that, just as the ships were preparing to land the troops in the Bay of Kaffa, whence they were to march to Arabat and thence back upon Kertch, a steamer appeared in sight with the recall signal flying! Canrobert had received some telegraphic dispatch from Paris which induced him to recall the expedition at the last moment. The army is much put out, and is rapidly losing confidence in its Head, so the sooner we have a Head, albeit it be a crowned one, the better. I believe Lord Raglan to be as much annoyed as we are at this untoward recall, for which no explanation is generally afforded. One of the consequences, a very minor one I confess, will probably be that to-morrow we shall move back to our old camp on the opposite hill, as the 42nd will land and resume for the present their old position.

Camp, North Side, Balaklava.

11th May.—Here we are, back in our old camp. The recall of the expedition to Kertch excited such general disgust that we thought our double move but a trifle in the way of inconvenience. Poor Lord Raglan is half crazy at Canrobert's folly in recalling the troops *re infecta*; for it appears that the dispatch from Paris merely told him to concentrate, and did not speak of the expedition itself, as it was not known that it had sailed. I think it will go hard with Canrobert, who has latterly lost the confidence of both his own men and ourselves. I suspect, however, that the Emperor would be in as great a fix to find a successor to him as we should to our Chief, supposing, which I trust is not likely, that there was an idea of his recall. . . .

The Turkish contingent is now the fashion. I saw Shirley, the late colonel of the 7th Hussars, yesterday. He, you know, is to command the Cavalry, and he speaks most highly of the men he has seen hitherto. Cunyng-hame, our A.Q.M. General, is to be a major-general in that service.* I confess I think it is "low form," and savours of the mercenary a good deal. However, it will be a year before the contingent is in a fit state to take the field, so the whole thing is a job.

Major Higginson to his mother, Lady Frances Higginson.

12th May.—Oh! my dear mother, those infernal powders! Pray forgive the language; but I have just tasted some effervescing saline quinine powders which have nearly annihilated me. They came in two tin boxes; pray do not send any more! All I wanted was a quantity of simple "citratèd kali" in bottles, without any admixture of quinine or the gratuitous medical advice which

* Afterwards General Sir Arthur Cunyng-hame, K.C.B. Died in 1884.

accompanies it. My reason was this—the most popular drink we sell at our regimental canteen is lemonade; we can't make it fast enough, so I thought this would be a simple and portable substitute. But I am inclined now in favour of bottles of lemon juice, the same as is sent out with the ships of war.

The same to his father.

15th.— . . . The Sardinians have already landed some troops, and are to encamp at Karani till quite organized, when they will occupy the plain of Balaklava and the redoubts which were lost on the 28th October. They appear to me to be very strong active fellows, admirably dressed and equipped, and full of anxiety to do something. Cadogan* is in great force among them and is looking remarkably well.

What a show up of our system the Duke of Newcastle's evidence is! Poor man, no wonder he broke down under such an accumulation of evils.

I am getting our young soldiers into tolerable order and they are already pretty handy. I find my theory about the lime and lemon juice is sound. The thirsty souls drink about 18 gallons a day. Recipe.—Four fresh lemons to a gallon of water, a pound of sugar made into syrup, and a pint of lime juice! There is not a stomach-ache in a bucketful, and it keeps them from rum and "raki."

Camp above Balaklava.

May 18th, 1855.— . . . You have often heard me express, more perhaps than was justifiable in so young a soldier, my wish that a peace might be patched up, no matter how, so that we could get clear; and then,

* George, second son of third Earl Cadogan. Afterwards General Sir George, K.C.B. Died in 1880.

if the diplomatists found that the wounded honour of France and England required the knife again before the *plaie* would heal, take the field elsewhere and with one generalissimo. I could not at the time I thus wrote fully give the reasons for thus despairing of our ever doing more in the Crimea than perhaps honourably extricating ourselves from our position, and contenting ourselves with an external acquaintance with Sebastopol. The truth is, however, now being daily more publicly known, so I do not see why I should not have my say. At the time of the last bombardment it had been positively settled by Lord R., Canrobert, and Sir E. Lyons, that the simple bombardment having proved ineffectual, an assault should be attempted in the following way. A continuous and very heavy fire was to be kept up two days, two nights, and till 2 p.m. the third day, when, in broad daylight, the storming parties were to go at the four great works all at once, the Redan, the Garden, the Round Tower, and the Mamelon. All was ready on our part; but at the last moment, notwithstanding all his protestations, Canrobert positively refused on account of the responsibility. Lyons was furious and swore like a Trojan; Lord Raglan quiet, but dreadfully annoyed. Well, then comes the expedition to Kertch, planned with great skill and foresight, and reluctantly consented to by this miserably weak Frenchman. While the troops were embarking, he allowed the batteries of artillery to put their horses on board, and then withheld the guns. Rose* remonstrated, and spoke strongly on his thus at the last moment weakening the force without any assignable reason. Canrobert then immediately went on board a fast French steamer and inquired how long it would take to get up steam. The captain was ordered to be perpetually in readiness. In the middle of the night, after the expedition sailed, the steamer was started off with the recall, the alleged excuse

* Afterwards Field-Marshal Lord Strathnairn. Died in 1885.

being that in the present state of the conference an offensive movement was not advisable. Now how can war be carried on thus?

A Cabinet at home is but a nest of mixed counsels, but, by Jupiter! we can't stand a "Junta" out here. I really do pity poor Lord R. immensely, as I believe he is all for action, and hitherto, our army being less in the proportion of one man to the French five, he could not naturally claim the deciding vote in council. Now that the Piedmontese are arrived and form part of the British—so to say—army, his importance is materially increased, and he may insist on active measures, throwing out threats of acting on his own account if his advice is not complied with. With all this going on here and every mail from England bringing us fresh evidence of the imbecility of the home authorities and the vicious misrepresentations, you may imagine we feel sorely the humiliating position we are in.

21st.— . . . The dismissal of Canrobert from the chief command is an immense thing for our army: Pélissier, who succeeds him, is not a popular man, but a tremendous fire-eater: you may recollect he was the general who burnt all the women and children pleasantly in the cave at Dahra in Algeria. Canrobert won't go home, but remains under Pélissier, showing others that whatever his faults may be he is willing to do his best. . . .

Lord Raglan told Prince Edward yesterday that "at any rate there is one appointment of brevet-major I am glad of." I omit the name which you shall fill up! I must say that on all sides I meet with the most cordial good wishes, and what can I wish for more?

29th.— . . . Well, this Kertch business is indeed satisfactory, not that I know any of the particulars as yet.*

* Kertch was abandoned by the Russians on 24th May on the approach and landing from the allied fleet of a combined British and French force

Pray Heaven the Anapa foray may turn out as successful and with as little loss. One unfortunate Highlander was the only casualty at Kertch, and he was shot by a Frenchman by accident. I think I told you that the last battle that was fought near Kertch was the battle of Zela, when Cæsar wrote the dispatch of "Veni, vidi, vici." Old Brown might write the same, and with equal reason, for the Russians bolted immediately.

. . . We celebrated Her Majesty's birthday by a cavalry review, which went off very well. Pélissier, a little fat old man, made his first appearance as generalissimo, alongside Lord Raglan and Omar. The latter is a most dignified-looking man.

under Sir George Brown and General d'Autemarre. The enemy blew up as much as he could of his stores, etc., but large quantities fell into the hands of the Allies.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SIEGE CONTINUED

June and July, 1855

As the Spring drew on visitors from England began to arrive; among others Lord Ward* in his steam yacht, laden with luxuries put freely at our disposal. I remember making a very pleasant day's excursion with him during which, by coasting near the shore we obtained good views of the beautiful villas, most of them already in ruins, of the great Russian nobles, which dotted the undercliff of the southern coast of the Black Sea.

In addition to his friendly visits to our camp and his generous gifts to the sick, Lord Ward showed much interest in the more serious aspects of camp life, and nothing would satisfy him but to visit the trenches, a project from which I in vain attempted to dissuade him. So one day I took him up to the front, and led him through the zig-zags and parallels, as far as I thought it was safe; but just in front of us, a mule laden with water-skins was being led along a trench, when a round shot found its way over the parapet, killing both mule and driver. My companion then agreed with me that he had seen quite enough. He wore the undress uniform of the Worcestershire Yeomanry, and it must have been a satisfaction to

* The earldom of Dudley was revived for him in 1860. He died in 1885.

him on returning to England, and the next occasion of commanding his regiment, that he had been not only under fire, but in imminent danger.

Balaklava.

June 2nd, 1855.— . . . We have been in great tribulation the last three days. Our old enemy the cholera has revisited us, and in forty-eight hours has swept away no less than twenty victims in the Brigade. I never saw it in so virulent a form; no premonitory symptoms to give the poor sufferers notice that the hand of the destroyer was upon them. Thank God, the plague seems now to be stayed, as since yesterday morning no fresh cases have occurred, and those that now remain alive show evident signs of improvement. Still it has been shockingly depressing to all. Strange to say, not one of the old soldiers who have been through the winter was attacked. The disease seemed to seek out the younger men and those that came out with the last draft. The army generally has suffered much from cholera, particularly the Piedmontese; but we all hope that the blight has blown over. The weather is lovely, but very hot until the sea breeze sets in towards the evening.

5th.— . . . Well, you see they have been making hay to some purpose in the Sea of Azov, and captured quite a flotilla of boats, besides enormous quantities of grain. There seems to be a doubt whether the Russians have not a third road between Arabat and Perekop which we can't get at. However, the destruction of two of the channels of supplies must be a very serious blow. Lord Raglan tells us in a G.O. that upwards of 100 guns have been captured, and that the enemy blew up sixty mines at Soujag Kali, which has been evacuated. . . .

This presentation of Crimean medals seems to have been a grand affair. Somehow we don't quite like it out

here, as there were many recipients who ought to have been here instead of there.

I do not eat and drink much. If I did I should be a gone coon. Bread and butter or marmalade at breakfast, some rice at two—no meat till after sunset, when we dine.

Claret and water is the usual drink.

6th.— . . . About an hour ago the third great bombardment opened! The noise is deafening. I cannot and will not believe that this time we shall fail. Report says that they assault the Mamelon, the Redan, and the Cemetery to-morrow. . . . You are quite right about our divided counsels. I pity Lord Raglan, who has, I believe, all along been anxious for rigorous measures, but that imbecile Canrobert has marred all by his vacillation.

8th.— . . . Well! you see that our much vilified army has made a beginning, and if I am to judge by the scene of yesterday, a few more such *coups* and Sebastopol will be a thing "as was." It is rarely that one has a chance of seeing a battle; spectators generally become actors before the end of the day, and actors can only attend to their particular rôles; so perhaps I was fortunate in witnessing this attack on the two important forts, completely as an amateur, for our force could by no manner of means be included in the fray. The bombardment reopened at 3 o'clock on the afternoon of the 6th, and late in the evening of that day I had pretty good information that the French were about to attack the Mamelon Battery, and the English the quarry pits in front of the Redan at 5 p.m. on the 7th. In fact they were to storm in broad daylight, the whole army looking on. The troops themselves were not warned for their work till 12 o'clock yesterday, so that the matter was kept, for once in a way, secret from the Russians.

I rode up about 3 p.m. in company with a host of the

officers of the army of the plain, who had nought to do but to look on. The road up to the front had a "going to the Derby" look, though it were a sin to say so. Now and then a friend cantered past looking anxious and grave, and accounted for his haste by—"I have a brother going in."

The firing for two hours before the appointed time was kept up with redoubled vigour, and shells, round shot, carcasses, and rockets raced through the air in the direction of the devoted city. About 15,000 Turks of Omar Pacha's army marched up to the Inkerman hill at 4 o'clock, I suppose to act as a support. At 4.30 our detachments paraded. As is usual with our army, we did not employ more men than were thought quite necessary for the work they were going to undertake; and as the quarries were not large or the distance to them great, the attacking force consisted of only 300 men, with double that number in support, and about 2000 as reserve. The French had at least 20,000 men employed.

It was impossible to see both parties attack; I knew what must be the result of the British, I determined to look only to the French movements, so I stationed myself about 300 yards to the right front of Cathcart's Hill, whence I could look right over Gordon's battery into the Mamelon and Round Tower. As the time drew on we grew more and more anxious, the crowd of spectators increased, and all the agitation of expectancy was working on every one's countenance, except those of the men going to do the deed; these all looked bright and jolly, as if starting on a party of pleasure, a quick nervous grip as you shook your fighting friend by the hand alone betraying that he was aware that more than ordinary peril was awaiting him. Lord Raglan stationed himself in a quarry behind the left (or Chapman's) attack, whence he could see both storming parties advance.

At 5.30 three rockets shot forth from the battery below

the picket house on the Woronzow road. I had my glass fixed on the advanced French trench, and scarce had the third rocket fizzed its last fiz, when out popped, like so many rats, about 1000 Chasseurs-de-Vincennes, and up the sloping side of the Mamelon they danced, growing into a wedge-like form as the best runners or the best plucked ones got to the front. In two minutes they were over the parapet and peppering away at the enemy inside; while more and more pour on and make good the *pied-à-terre* already won by the *élan* of the advanced party. The cannonading then became positively terrific: our batteries no longer directing their attention to the Mamelon, devoted all their fire to the Malakoff Tower, and literally wrapped it up in flame and smoke.

Presently we could descry the French pouring out of the cheaply won Mamelon Battery in the direction of the Tower. This was, I believe, not intended to be included in the afternoon's entertainment, unless the first act proved so successful as to justify the attacking column in attempting it. And now began a *combat acharné*. The Russians, driven with ease from the first battery, which had neither ditch nor abattis, retired upon the Malakoff, which was protected by both; and the French, not having waited to make a lodgment in the Mamelon, rushed furiously after the Russians hoping, no doubt, to go into the Malakoff with them; but this was not to be.

The truth is that the supports did not effect a lodgment at all in the battery; and I suspect the reason to have been that, the fort being open at the gorge, the Russian ships could play a horrid game with the new inhabitants until gabions, etc., could be got up to make cover with.

The consequence of all this was, that after half an hour's most murderous fighting close to the abattis of the Malakoff, the French retired upon the Mamelon, and the Ruskies, recovering from their surprise, came up in force.

With that elasticity for which our Gallic allies are so

remarkable, they *se reculaient* as rapidly as they advanced, and the Russians not only recovered the Mamelon, but pursued the French right into their own advanced work. Here, however, Bosquet, knowing that this "withdrawal" was likely to happen, had a very large fresh reserve waiting, which instantly assumed the offensive, and, after a desperate struggle, sent the Muscovites uphill again at the point of the bayonet, and replaced the tricolour on the parapet of the Mamelon. It is now 8 o'clock, and I had work to do at our own camp, so I was obliged to jump on my horse and hurry off; but the latest accounts say that the French now hold the Mamelon firmly, and are erecting a battery in it against the Round Tower. As for our own fellows, I am told by an eye-witness that on the signal being given, they threw themselves over the parapet of the left attack like hounds rushing into a covert, and bundled the astonished Russ out of his quarry in a twinkling. The sappers were handy, and in half an hour they were under cover notwithstanding an awful fire from the Redan.

9th.—I left off yesterday in order to ride up to the front and hear some more news. The French I found hard at work establishing themselves. They had already made a good covered way between their advanced work and the Mamelon. Our fellows were snugly under a breastwork in the quarry within forty yards of the Redan, which fourteen of our mortars kept quite silent. This breastwork had not, however, been made during the night without very severe loss on our side: fifteen times did the Russians sortie, three times were we driven out, and as often retook the trench; and by daybreak the cover was completed. We had 3000 men employed altogether. The French loss is estimated at between 3000 and 4000, probably the latter is nearest the mark.

As to the Russian loss it must be fearfully great. We had a short G.O. published last night congratulating the

army on this brilliant affair, probably to-night we shall have the details.

12th.— . . . We have been extending our lines towards the south, and the French cavalry now occupy the valleys about Baidar. I rode out thither two days ago for a distance of about twelve miles, till I came on a little summer palace of Prince Woronsow, in which nothing was left but a quantity of rose trees. The view from a little tower near it over Baidar is magnificent. I explored the house in company with Rokeby, Ridley, and Lord Ward, who joined the party as we started, and I experienced the novel sensation of *walking up a staircase*, a feat I had not performed for nearly a year!

The country through which we rode reminded me much of Windsor Park; flowers in profusion were in all directions, and curious birds with beautiful plumage flew around from bush to bush.

. . . I expect every day to get the order to move up to the front, as it is right that we should be in at the finish; so you must not expect we shall remain here idle, though I cannot positively say what we are to do. "Dieu disposera!"

*Camp above Balaklava,
June 15th, 1855.*

MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER,

We are drawing near to the 18th, of glorious associations, and I should not be surprised if the "go in" were to take place on that day, and so terminate the jealousy between our two armies; not indeed that I have ever heard the disagreeable name Waterloo mentioned. Every one is very confident and the Artillery say that it is impossible the Round Tower can hold out against the overwhelming fire that will be poured against it. I imagine that the attack will be made in the daytime and on all sides at once.

The Highlanders and French have returned from Kertch, having had a most successful expedition without loss or annoyance of any kind. We are all very indignant at the Museum at Kertch having been pillaged and destroyed. It was a wanton and unnecessary destruction of a collection of antiquities of immense value.

It turns out now that the attack on the Mamelon and Batterie Blanche, which lies between it and the sea, took the Russians completely by surprise. In the latter fort the men were eating their dinners, and the soup was just being poured out into the tins! As these works have been built on an entirely new principle, and the guns and gunners protected by casemates, the moment the attacking party gained the parapet the garrison became like rats in a trap and had to surrender. The French took 14 officers (one a general) and 400 men in the Batterie Blanche alone. Among other things they found a complete plan of the Malakoff Tower and fort, which enlightened our eyes considerably. Every gun, magazine, and mine is clearly laid down, and even the spots where these horrible *fougasses*, or powder barrels, are laid, which blow up as soon as you tread on them.

16th.—. . . We received our orders last night, and march up to-day, so I suppose that the event will come off to-morrow. I understand, as far as anything connected with the programme can be understood, that we are to be in reserve and only used in case of emergency. We march up light, and it is supposed that we shall return to Balaklava as soon as the south side falls, and that then we shall start on a new expedition somewhere.

The day fixed for the great assault was the 18th June—the anniversary of Waterloo. No doubt the date had been selected, both by ourselves and our Allies, in the hope of cementing more closely the growing friendship between

the two nations. I am glad to think that, despite the failure of our combined attack, the *entente* between the two armies was not impaired, but that every effort was made by both to fulfil the task entrusted to them.

Our Brigade was held in reserve during the attack, and no doubt a certain gloom fell upon us as, from time to time, news of the unavailing efforts of the Third and Fourth Divisions to cross the exposed ground between our trenches and the Redan reached us, while we stood in line, ready to support them. Nor had the success of our allies been greater, and failure had to be acknowledged. Lord Raglan passed close to me on his return from his advanced post to headquarters. His features retained that grave, resolute expression which they had always borne of late, but I could not fail to notice the sad look of his eyes as he passed round the flank of our deployed line. Ten days afterwards, worn out in body by the disorder which the cholera had left busy in our midst, and I fear broken in spirit by the cold criticisms and harsh judgment of the authorities at home, he found that repose in death which had been denied to him since he undertook his thankless task.

It is not for me to offer more than the personal judgment of one who served under him during the most trying period of his command, and had exceptional opportunities of noting the difficulties which beset him in every effort to maintain the goodwill and co-operation of our allies, and to uphold the prestige of the British Army, whereof the traditions were so dear to him. The conventional eulogies from both parties in the Houses of Parliament were uttered by the very men to whose ignorance and

incompetence he owed the difficulties of a task to the fulfilment of which he devoted all the efforts of his well-balanced judgment, combined with a self-effacement which disarmed criticism. His name will not go down to posterity as that of a great leader of armies, nor could he ever have been the rival of either Wellington or Bonaparte in the rapid grasp of opportunity which those two great commanders displayed, but it must be remembered that he was long past the age when physical endurance could stand a protracted strain. His bearing was that of a great gentleman, and he never spoke but with courtesy and consideration, though, I admit, seldom with geniality. The attitude of the army towards him was one rather of deference and veneration than personal regard.

The following anecdote will, I think, justify what I have written.

Some years later I was discussing with the Marquis d'Harcourt (at that time French Ambassador to our Court) the character of Marshal Pélissier, who had been one of his predecessors at St. James's. I spoke of the rough, resolute, and unpolished manners of the Marshal as exhibited during the late war.

"That is true," replied M. d'Harcourt, "but when I talked to Pélissier about his relations with Lord Raglan, he observed to me, 'Comme militaire je ne cède rien; mais du reste—je n'étais pas digne de dénouer le cordon de ses souliers.'"

Nor was our enemy wanting in respect for his memory, for on the day that Lord Raglan's remains were carried on board the *Caradoc* for conveyance to England, the Russians ceased their fire while the procession from Headquarters

passed along the line of troops of both French and English armies on its way to the point of embarkation.

Heights before Sebastopol.

19th June, 1855.—You may imagine that but few of us slept much on the night of the 17th. At a little before three we were under arms, and were marched to the front of the Light Division picket-house, where we deployed into two lines and lay down. At a quarter-past three the French had begun their attack on the Malakoff. Column after column was poured on to the work, and as often swept back by the fire of grape and musketry which prevented the stormers from reaching the ditch. Our attacking party was not intended to storm the Redan until the Malakoff was captured, as the latter commands the former, and the possession of the one would be of no value without the other. However, our stormers, principally Light Division men, were sent off too soon, and without sufficient support, and found the abattis and ditch unsurmountable. Scarce a man returned. I cannot describe all that happened, as the smoke was so thick we who were in reserve could see but little. The long and the short of the matter, as far as I can understand, is this—we had not bombarded the Malakoff and Redan nearly long enough, and the silence of the Russian guns which we interpreted as a proof of their being useless, must have been a *ruse*; for directly our brave fellows ran up within a few yards, they opened this awful fire of grape and canister.

The French attacked two hours too soon. The Russians, it appears, had intended making a sortie that very morning, and had 10,000 additional men in the Redan and Malakoff. . . . I read the confidential orders for the officers commanding divisions in which the whole plan is detailed. I can only say that those orders were acted up to by the subordinates to the letter, as far as could be done, and this is important, as I think it

probable that one or two general officers will be abused for not supporting, etc., whereas they acted exactly according to order.

We have therefore received, as an army, a check which will cause much delay in the capture of the place and alter the plan of operations materially. As to the ultimate result, that must be equally certain as before.

The consequence to our division is that we are in for the trenches again, and probably shall have some nasty work. We sent 2000 men in last night under Ridley; there was a sortie at midnight, but I have not been able hitherto to gain any intelligence regarding it. I have not been able yet to ascertain our exact loss, but it is large, and the officers killed and wounded is much larger than that of the men. I fancy about seventy officers are killed and wounded. Eyre's* brigade got into the town by the cemetery, and could not be got at till after dark. He is wounded, poor Yea† killed, Shirley (88th) missing,‡ Forman,§ poor dear fellow, killed right up at the ditch of the Redan, Jones slightly wounded,|| and Tylden very badly hurt.¶ You will, however, get the list most likely by this post.

22nd—. . . My last letter will have told you in a few words what a jolly licking the allies received on the

* Major-General Sir William Eyre, K.C.B., commanding 3rd Division. Died in 1859.

† Colonel Lacy Yea, commanding 7th Royal Fusiliers.

‡ Lieut.-Col. Horatio Shirley, commanding Connaught Rangers, was not killed. He died in 1879, General and K.C.B.

§ Captain in the Rifle Brigade.

|| Major-General (Sir) Harry David Jones, commanding engineer of the siege works. Born in 1791, he served in the Walcheren expedition and under Wellington in the Peninsula, where his brother, Sir John Thomas Jones, was commanding engineer. Sir Harry was severely wounded in the forehead by a grape shot in the assault on the Redan, and died in 1866.

¶ Capt. Richard Tylden, R.E., died at Malta on 2nd August.

18th, and at how great sacrifice of good English blood the attack on the Redan was made. . . . I think that perhaps I did not lay quite enough importance on the fact that General de Megrien, who led the French assault on the Malakoff, mistook an ill-bursting rocket which split into three or four jets as it was discharged, for the bouquet of rockets which was to be the signal of attack. Now the former ill-omened projectile was discharged at a quarter to three, and the latter was not ordered to explode till half-past three; consequently the reserves for the attack, many of which had to come from a considerable distance, had not arrived, and the attacking party was not properly supported. Our attacking party destined for the Redan does not appear to me to have been well organized; but in addition to being absurdly weak in numbers, was exposed to failure of support and undue exposure. The French swear that two of their battalions were inside the Malakoff for twenty minutes, and that the signal which had been pre-arranged between Lord R. and Pelissier, was really hoisted in the shape of the tricolour flag, which caused Lord R. to launch his stormers at the Redan. I myself doubt the French ever having been inside; and think that the flag which was seen flying was a ruse of the enemy's. The French loss was enormous; ours unduly severe in officers, which can be easily accounted for, as the undertaking was from the beginning thought desperate, and only officers and a very few men reached the abattis in front of the ditch. It was there that Sir John Campbell* and Yea were killed, both national losses.

I believe there are few instances on record of *combinaisons militaires* having succeeded, where the success of

* Brigadier-General Sir John Campbell of Ava, Bart. Was given temporary command of the 4th Division after Inkerman, but was superseded on June 7th, 1855, by the appointment of Lieut.-General Bentinck.

one depended on advantages previously gained by the other. It was here that we failed, and also in the too lamentable ignorance of our engineers, both French and English, as to the real effect produced by our battering train. There is no use in denying that the army is disgusted, not at this our first reverse, for reverses always will happen, but through want of confidence in the leaders. We do not feel that there is any guarantee that the same mistake may not be made again and with the same lamentable loss of life. In ten days the British army had 160 officers *hors de combat*, and under 2000 men.

I am the more confirmed in this opinion from what happened to myself yesterday. We have now to furnish daily 1000 to 1500 men from the 1st Division, and these form part of the 8000 men which guard the whole right attack, quarries and all. An adjutant of the day is detailed, whose duty it is to tell off the whole of the parties for the different posts, of which there cannot be less than five and twenty. You can understand the difficulty there must be in threading one's way through such a labyrinth of zigzags and parallels, directing twenty-five different parties to as many posts, all depending on each other, the most advanced being within eighty yards of the enemy. I went, therefore, to a friend of mine, a very sharp fellow in the 47th, for a lesson in the matter; for all these advanced trenches have been made since we left the front in February. You will scarce believe me when I tell you that there are, even now, no orders of any kind issued for the guidance of officers in command; everything is left to the discretion of the general of the day, who delegates it to the field-officer of the day, who confers with the adjutant, and they decide as they think best. Not a rule for fighting, retiring, supporting, rallying, or pursuing is even hinted at; and had I not chosen to inform myself personally of the usual mode adopted

by the divisions which have been furnishing the trench guards latterly, I might have been in orders for a duty I was entirely incompetent to fulfil. Consequently I passed the whole of yesterday afternoon (my birthday, by the way) in the trenches with a plan in my hand well marked and numbered, and now am prepared, thanks to my friend in the 47th. And yet there is no use in their changing our chiefs. We have no man as capable as Lord R. and the drain upon his lieutenants. . . .

(*Cætera desunt.*)

25th.— . . . We are expecting to hear of the fury of England at our attack by assault having failed. It was a bad business, no doubt, but the less said the soonest mended. It is somewhat strange that the health of the generals of division should have begun to fail just at the same time. Poor old Brown is really very unwell; so is Codrington; Estcourt is dead; Pennefather* gone to England. Those that remain are not in very good spirits. I was talking to General Barnard† a day or two ago, and he did not conceal that he was disgusted. As for the French, they are shockingly down in the mouth. The siege works remain in *statu quo*, except that we are making a new battery just behind the quarries.

Sir Colin is now in command of the First Division, and I see much of him. He is very civil, but capricious. He always asks after you. . . .

30th.— . . . The news of Lord Raglan's death, which fell so heavily on us the night before last, must by this time have been received, discussed, mourned over, and

* Major-General (afterwards General and G.C.B.), commanding 2nd Division, was invalided home. Died in 1872.

† Major-General, afterwards Sir Henry, Barnard, commanding a brigade of the 3rd Division. Died as commander-in-chief at Delhi in 1857.

treated as a thing of the past by you, thanks to the telegraph.

Poor old man! It was his very kindheartedness that prevented his being a great general; for I have already found out that nothing but extreme indifference to all private considerations will ever carry a general through a war like this. This horrid disorder which the climate of this Asiatic (!) paradise seems to inflict on all who come here, attacked Lord Raglan the day after the *jour funeste*, and we all know that mental anxiety is the very worst thing for such a complaint. Then followed Estcourt's death, Brown's illness, Pennefather's departure—I can well understand his sinking. Sir G. Brown has since started for England. What effects all this mortality and important changes may have on our army it is difficult to say. Some, the more sanguine, augur well from the infusion of new blood and fresh brains into our system. I am not of the number; and I look upon it that we have no general living, who, with the means here at his disposal, can effect the gigantic work demanded by the people, or rather the press, of England. Late experience in the trenches more than ever convinces me of this. It is quite impossible the men can last out many weeks, employed as they now are, unless some great and unforeseen success should act as a stimulus and revive, not their determination, for they have plenty of that, but their ardour. . . . The French are openly and avowedly cowed at their fearful losses; the English look upon each other as victims to a dire necessity; while they have not the smallest idea of receding, they at the same time feel that advance is but synonymous with annihilation. Our Engineers are reduced in numbers fearfully, and the exigencies of the service are so great that they have no time for improving and striking out new ideas. What is the consequence? Our men are crammed into the trenches without system, without orders. The parapets, indifferently constructed and seldom

repaired, let round shot and grape through them as if they were but brown paper, and "it is nobody's business to interfere." A few nights ago I was adjutant of the trenches, and had to distribute the 3,000 men that form the guard. I never ceased nearly the whole night going round from post to post, kicking up sleeping men and warning working parties which are kept incessantly at work on new batteries.

As for coolness and indifference to danger I never saw, or rather never could have believed that mortal men could be so reckless. A knot of fellows are sitting in a trench telling stories, a 13-inch shell comes whistling over the parapet and falls gracefully into the trench—whish, whish, bang! and up goes the dust, and every fellow's head is shoved into the gabions under the fond impression that the rest of his body is equally protected; which impression is happily confirmed, unless he find himself minus a limb or two by the time the smoke has cleared away. . . .

3rd July.— . . . To-day we embark our late General's remains with funeral honours. Our regiment furnishes 100 men as a guard of honour at Khutor. The English troops, such as can be spared, line the road as far as the French Headquarters, and then the French take up the procession and line the road as far as Kamiesch, where the *Caradoc* will be in waiting.

The whole of the Staff go home, I believe, except Steele and Curzon.* Rumour is busy, and scarce an hour passes but a new chief is named. I think the one most generally believed is that, if Lord Hardinge does not come out, Sir Colin will command under Pélissier, who is very unpopular with his generals. I think Bosquet is the best man the French have out here. He commands the army that was

* Hon. Leicester Curzon, seventh son of the first Earl Howe; took the name of Smyth in 1866, and was known as General Sir Leicester Smyth; Governor of Gibraltar, 1890; died 1891.

on the Tchernaya. . . . Altogether our case is the most awkward one that can be imagined. There is not a man in the army, from the generals to the pioneers, who is not disgusted and dissatisfied. At the bare mention of wintering here again, a cold shudder of recollection of the *agréments* of last December overpowers all other feeling. And yet I do not see any other alternative.

I went on board the *St. Jean d'Acre* on Saturday and stayed Sunday with [my cousin] Henry Knox. She lies off the mouth of Sebastopol harbour and you can see right into the town and watch most accurately with a good glass the reverse of all the Russian batteries. I could see the swarms of Russians at work in the Malakoff, the Redan, and the new citadel on the Russian left of the Malakoff.

A system of signals established between this ship and our batteries would enable us to drop a 13-inch shell just at the right moment on their working parties. I mentioned all I saw to several Engineers, but not one was the least aware that this could be done! I was sent to General Jones to tell him, but preferred sending the valuable information through another *génie*!

In more than one way did the loss of our Chief gravely affect the prospect before us. Speculation immediately arose as to who was to be Lord Raglan's successor. Pending instructions from England, the Chief of the Staff, Sir James Simpson, assumed the command. His reputation as a tried soldier in India had been reported upon most favourably by Sir Charles Napier for his conduct during the second Sikh War. He was known to few in the army before Sebastopol, had not been present either at the Alma or Inkerman, and it was not supposed he had any special qualifications for maintaining our good relations with the French. The death of Sir George Cathcart at Inkerman

had removed from us the general believed to be best qualified to succeed Lord Raglan, and among surviving generals of division no one appeared to possess the temperament or qualities which we all hoped to find in our future Commander-in-Chief. Eventually General Simpson was confirmed in his command, and the feelings of jealousy and doubt were for a time allayed, as the relations between him and Marshal Péliissier were soon known to be of a very cordial character.

■

CHAPTER XV

THE FALL OF SEBASTOPOL

September, 1855

Camp, Heights before Sebastopol.

July 6th, 1855.— . . . Though there may be wisdom in a multitude of counsels, real decision and the grasping at opportunities cannot be considered the attributes of a general in council. Simpson appears determined to act decidedly in his more humble capacity; for it is useless for us to pretend to an equal share in the balance with our allies. . . .

. . . We have had an average of four men in my regiment alone *hors de combat* daily in the trenches; the quarries are subjected to a perpetual hailstorm of grape and coehorn shells. The Engineers say that bomb-proofs might easily be made, by which the safety of the men might be secured; but you will hardly believe it, there is not a yard of government timber in the Crimea! It was urgently represented that if the sailing ships of war that have been sent home were to leave their spare spars and gear for platforms, etc., an immense advantage would be gained; but no! and until we have a sailor captain strong-minded enough to run his ship ashore, and so break her up, we must do without, except by begging from the railroad. Rokeby has been breakfasting to-day with Pélissier. He tells me that, though rough, his manner is by no means boorish, and that he spoke of Lord Raglan as a man under whom he would have been content to serve "jusqu'au bout du monde." Rokeby alluded to the

French *ordre-du-jour* on the poor general's death. Pélissier replied, "That was to give your cursed gazetteers in London an idea of how Lord Raglan was appreciated in the French army!"

14th . . . I have nothing to report, except that we begin to find that the telegraph has its disadvantages as well as its advantages, for it is evident that we are to be commanded through the wires like little cardboard Harlequins, and if that system of orders from home is to be persisted in, in spite of all the warnings that history furnishes, we had better shut up the shop. Barnard was appointed Chief of the Staff, and assumed his duties. He had scarcely done so for twenty-four hours when a telegraphic message arrived to suspend him. And now I hear that Simpson is suspended. A whisper has even been heard that the Royal Duke is coming out. Others say Lord Melville.

I had a rough twenty-four hours in the trenches after I last wrote; the Ruskies fell foul of our working parties, and treated them to grape most warmly. Sir Colin C. chose to take command himself, and as he did not know the ground, I had to guide him over the advanced works; consequently we are great allies, and if it be possible for him to have a good opinion of a Guardsman, which I doubt! I believe that 'ere individual is myself. He is a man of extraordinary powers, both of mind and body, considering his age;* but his great wish is now to settle down quietly in England, where he says he has scarce passed six months since he was a boy.

17th.— . . . The approaches are gradually lessening the distance between the French and the Malakoff, and ourselves and the Redan. The Russians oppose lustily, but to no purpose, as the cover is good, and the space is

* He was in his 64th year.

too confined for them to form a column of attack. There was a tremendous shindy last night, but I have not yet heard anything about it, beyond that it was between the French and the enemy on the right of the Mamelon.

. . . I have just this moment received the report from the trenches where our fellows are on duty. The heavy firing last night was caused, as I thought, by the Russians attacking the Mamelon. The French appear to have given them a good dusting, and all the batteries opened a thundering cannonade on the Malakoff. We did not fire a shot (I mean fusillade), and had only one casualty, Captain Fraser of the 42nd, who was killed by a shell. . . .

21st. — . . . We are carrying our approaches wonderfully close; we can hear the Russians talking in the Redan distinctly, and they in their turn hear our picks and shovels rattling in the stony ground, and keep us plentifully supplied with grape. . . .

. . . I can well understand your feeling Lord Raglan's loss much. I doubt any man we have succeeding so well as he did with the French, who are certainly the most difficult creatures to manage that can be imagined.

Lord John Russell's speech on the 5th was a startler, I must for once cordially agree that Dizzy hit him hard and well.* But for his suppression of his opinion we might have had a peace of some sort long ago; and that would have extricated us from this fearful dilemma and

* Lord John as plenipotentiary at the Vienna Conference, had agreed to press upon his colleagues approval of conditions of peace put forward by the Austrian plenipotentiary. Being aware that there was no chance of the British Government accepting the conditions proposed, Lord John, returning home, dissembled, and said not a word about the Austrian proposals. Upon this Count Buol taxed him with dishonourable conduct, and the House of Commons waxed indignant when it became known how far Russell had committed the country to a peace policy. In the end, he had to resign office, not for the first, nor yet the last time.

enabled us to begin war again elsewhere, if necessary. As it is, I do not conceive it possible we can succeed so long as the press is allowed this intolerable license. A certain M. de Castellane of the French *État Major* was found the other day by Pélissier to have written his versions of the 18th and affairs in general to one of the French papers. He was instantly packed off to France in disgrace, to answer to the Emperor for his presumption; whereas I know of cases in this army where officers, disappointed at some conceived neglect, have instantly sat down and inscribed a letter to the *Times* or *Daily News*, relating what they call facts, but which are so highly coloured in the description that the meaning conveyed is of course the reverse of the truth.

Percy* has got the command of the Italian Legion; he goes to-morrow to Genoa. As yet he knows nothing whatever beyond the fact that he has the appointment; but what the strength or duties of the corps are, he knows no more than I do. The reason I mention this is that, immediately upon getting the appointment, he came to me and offered me to be adjutant-general, should there be such an office or any post similar to it. Of course, I did not say yes, as it will take a great deal of promotion to induce me to quit the Brigade, even though it took me away from this place; the more so as I have the Brigade majorship in prospect; but if the acceptance of such a post were to carry with it a lieutenant-colonelcy and other advantages, the question is whether I am justified in saying no.

. . . I merely mention all this in order that if the thing should really be a good one, as you may perhaps know something about it, you may send me advice in case the appointment should remain open.

* Captain and Lieut.-Col. the Hon. Henry Percy, V.C., third son of the second Earl of Beverley, who succeeded as fifth Duke of Northumberland. Afterwards General and K.C.B. Died in 1877.

24th.— . . . Henry Keppel,* who now commands the Naval Brigade *vice* Lushington, dined with us last night. He is the beau ideal of a sailor, and I think the sailors' brigade will do something now besides merely hammer away at the 68-pounders. People have begun to find out that we have the best mess in the Brigade; consequently our evenings are passed more lively than is usual. We are four in number in our society, the two Hamiltons,† Russell,‡ and myself; so we always have two friends at dinner, and latterly Lord Rokeby has taken to inviting himself; his conversational powers are quite astounding.

The Russians made a furious sortie in the trench the night before last; but, as usual, were repulsed with much loss and no gain. The French have gained much more confidence in the trenches, and hold their own much more steadily. I do not think, however, that their *morale* is good; in fact, their own officers remark on and deplore the want of discipline.

By the way, I never told you Canrobert's compliment to our Brigade. He was alluding to the stand that our remnant of bearskins was making at the Battle of Inkerman just as his Division marched up to relieve us, and was saying how frequently he held up to his own men the necessity of acquiring that *tenacité* which is so much the characteristic of the English soldier. He concluded by saying, "Ma foi! pour bien exprimer ce que sont vos hommes, je dirais 'Ce sont des Redoutes qui marchent.'"

I do not think Pelissier's popularity is increased; the other generals hate him so cordially that nothing but a

* Seventh son of the fourth Earl of Albemarle, afterwards Admiral of the Fleet, G.C.B., and O.M. Died in 1904.

† Lieut.-Col., afterwards General Sir Frederick Hamilton, K.C.B., author of the "History of the Grenadier Guards"; and Lieut.-Col. Robert W. Hamilton, elder half-brother of the tenth Lord Belhaven and Stenton. Died in 1888.

‡ Sir Charles Russell, Bart., V.C., M.P. Died in 1883.

success will keep him at the head of the army. Bosquet is, I think, the man, and if I mistake not he is playing a game of his own which will end in his getting the command.

27th.— . . . We are doing little or nothing save hammering at the town and pushing on *à coup de pioche*. Mortars are arriving and they will, I think, render the earthworks untenable The list of C.B.'s amazes me. I cannot conceal my indignation at the omission of poor Hood's name and that of any officer of the Grenadier Guards. I look upon Hood's omission from the list as an insult to the dead, and a slight on the regiment, and we all feel it so. To what purpose did Hood save the Brigade at the Alma? And to what purpose was it that the Duke of Cambridge rode through the ranks thanking Hood for his behaviour, when the man who commanded the regiment that required the effort that Hood made, gets the honours that are due to his memory? . . .

From General Sir Henry Barnard, Chief of the Staff, to a correspondent in England.

Headquarters before Sebastopol.

29th July, 1855.— . . . Young Stanley is not well, pretty boy, and they *are* such boys! But the cheery way they do their duty in these horrid quarries has excited already the notice of the service generally, and anti-guardsmen admit they could not imagine the difference so great in a position where vigilance, courage and patience are required. Brigadier-General Van Straubenzee, a rising man, great talker, great swagger, and great anti-guardsmen, told me he never served with such officers and men; and as to young Higginson, he could not imagine anything equal to him. His attention to all points, his coolness, his method, and his [*illegible*] were perfect. In fact, he said, with such an adjutant a fool might be safe in the

trenches if he would but not interfere, and the best soldier be satisfied that his minutest instructions were carried out. If any change were made in them, it was with prudence, forethought, and judgment, to meet the emergency of the moment. Tell this to my dear old comrade the general [Higginson], and tell him I have not added one word to Van Straubenzee's encomium.

From Brevet-Major G. Higginson to his Father.

30th.— . . . You appear, like me, to be looking at the gloomy side of our picture, if indeed there be a bright side at all, which I am at times inclined to doubt. We are a good deal in the Rembrandt style; a single glimmer is all we can boast. You speak of a Clive or a Wellesley being required. I doubt whether any heaven-born general could extricate us, or do more towards advancing the objects of the campaign. The opinion so prevalent, I see, in England proceeds from an utter ignorance of the nature of this country. It is absolutely childish to talk of field operations, when your "field" is only a series of hills covered with close brushwood and without water. There is a saying attributed to Saint-Arnaud who, the French say, was always averse to the Crimean expedition: "If we do succeed it must be by a succession of *coups-de-main*." So it has proved. Our wonderful victory at the Alma surely justified another shy for good luck; but Canrobert's vacillation overruled what was the wish of the army, and I believe the opinion of Lord R. Now it is too late for *coups-de-main*. *Coups-de-pioches* is our game, and when an entrance is once forced, we must push on and secure the destruction of the south side. There is no doubt but that this can be done; but I look upon the *occupation* of the south side as impossible. Tier upon tier of batteries line the harbour on the north side, besides the Constantine, the Tchernaya, and the Star Forts.

4th August.— . . . We had a tremendous day in the trenches when I last wrote. The rain came down in torrents and flooded all the covered ways. Last night our fellows were in again. We lost one killed, five wounded in the Regiment, and Wenman Coke* was hit by a round shot, but not much hurt. I saw him an hour ago, and he was nearly right again. In addition to this, the cholera has returned, and we lost last night a valuable pay-sergeant after an illness of six hours! So you see we have other enemies besides the Ruskies. However, nothing can be better than the spirit of the battalion. I called for 80 volunteers last night for an advanced picket, requiring good men and much vigilance, and at least 150 came in a moment. Such men as these can never be replaced. They care no more for shot, shell, or bullets than they would for snowballs, and all their anxiety is to get a shy at the enemy. Oh! if the Queen would only send out a couple of hundred leaden crosses or medals to General Simpson, with orders to him to distribute daily as opportunity offered to men who distinguished themselves, what a spirit might still be roused! But at this moment all is mistrust of those in power and authority.

I am sorry you give so bad an account of Lord Francis Gordon.† If you see him again, pray tell him that young George is a right good soldier and will be a most efficient adjutant.‡ I never saw a boy so keen about his work or with greater pluck.

7th.— . . . You will have heard by this time that we are separated, or to be separated, from the Highlanders, and to become a division; another brigade being made up

* Fourth son of the first Earl of Leicester; was Captain and Lieut.-Colonel Scots Fusilier Guards. Died in 1907.

† Sixth son of ninth Marquess of Huntly. Died in 1857.

‡ Elder son of Lord Francis; afterwards Equerry, etc., to Prince and Princess Christian; served in Scots Fusilier Guards. Died in 1912.

by regiments as they may arrive. Rokeby, of course, has this division, and then there arises the question who is to have the [Guards] Brigade?

. . . Cholera is again on the ascendant, and our average losses by casualties in the trenches on only ordinary nights amount to fifty daily! The drafts and new regiments will barely fill up these vacancies.

Montague, the Engineer officer who was taken prisoner by the Russians in April, was exchanged the other day. He reports the place as awfully strong, there being several interior lines of defence to fall back upon after the Malakoff. He says that in Sebastopol all goes on as if there were no siege. Balls, parties, etc., and every luxury! A pleasant look out for us!

How silly Lord Cardigan appears to be: if he don't take care some ugly stories will be told.

Field Officers' Hut, Quarries (300 yards from the Redan).

August 10th, 1855. 9 a.m.—We had a more than usually "warm" night, *i.e.* the Russians kept up a perpetual hailstorm of grape, shell, and round shot. Fortunately it was so dark that while I was posting the advanced pickets they could not see us moving in the open; but the men even in the trenches suffered severely from the "mitraille," the Fusiliers who were in the fifth parallel especially; but I will not continue so disagreeable a subject as a bulletin of casualties. . . .

. . . One of our men excited the roars of his comrades by holloaing out that he was sure he was hit somewhere, but he couldn't tell where; and upon his friends looking him over carefully it was found that his left ear had been taken right off! I assure you this is a positive fact. We cannot afford to fire much as we have little ammunition left. I hear vessels are arriving with shell and powder; but, as it is, we have barely enough for safety in case of attack, much less for a bombardment. . . .

The other day, during a thunderstorm, I took refuge in a house where, shortly afterwards, Pélissier and his staff halted for an *abri*. I, of course, was let in for a conversation. I never in my life beheld such a repulsive old man, as far as looks go, nor are his manners much better.

14th.— . . . Something is brewing, I can see, but what I know not. The Duke of Newcastle appears to be consulted, as he is much at Headquarters.* The enemy has received large reinforcements within the last few days, some of the Guard, I hear. Ridley has been appointed to the 2nd Brigade, First Division. I need not say how sorry I am to lose him; but I am sure he is right to take the appointment, which he at first hesitated to do. He will have the 9th, 13th, 51st regiments and 2nd battalion Rifle Brigade. Who is to have the Brigade of Guards, Heaven knows!

17th.— . . . Yesterday, as you will have already heard, the Russian army of General Liprandi, comprising the newly arrived reinforcements, and numbering, it is computed, between 80,000 and 40,000 men, descended into the plain [by the McKenzie's Farm road, and attempted to force the Tchernaya and the French and Piedmontese positions on this side of that river. The columns of attack were brought up so quietly that the French appear to have been completely taken by surprise, much after our fashion on the morning of Inkerman. As far as I can make out,

* The Duke of Newcastle, having resigned the War Office, went out to the seat of war to see for himself. He wrote very mischievous letters home. Prince Albert, on reading them, wrote to Lord Clarendon (Foreign Secretary): "It is at all times hazardous for a civilian, going into a camp and picking up information from this or that person, and listening to stories flying about there, to give an opinion upon plans of operation, military system, the merit of the different men in command; but it was particularly so for the Duke. . . . I think the Duke's judgment upon General Simpson hasty and harsh."

the French had not above 4000 men altogether on the Tchernaya; the Piedmontese must have about 11,000 fighting men of all ranks. The latter were posted chiefly about and to the south of Tchorgoun and Tchorlou, and on those heights they maintained themselves so well as to win general admiration. The Russians appear to have found the Piedmontese position too strong for the real attack, so they threw all their weight upon the bridge at Traktir; and before the French weak battalions could get formed to impede the attack, forced the *tête-du-pont*. There, however, the heights close in on the road, and the French position guns began to work to some purpose. This partial success of the Russians proved in the end the cause of their failure; the rapidly collected French regiments poured such a fire upon the bridge and the low ground just round it that the enemy was completely checked. Three times did they make the attack; but as reinforcements and fresh guns kept arriving every moment on the French side the successive attacks only entailed severer loss, without any result beyond the fact that some Russians (about 1000, I believe) did force their way up one height, where they were met by the 20^{me} *de ligne*, which was in ambuscade, and those that were not knocked over were made prisoners. We had no troops engaged, except the new 18-pounder battery, which is reported to have done good service. Our cavalry were in reserve on the plain of Balaklava. Altogether the Russians have had a really good licking; there are fully 1200 dead on the field; as many more wounded were carried past our camp to the French ambulance on *cacolets* last night, and 500 or 600 have been carried past this morning. The French, I am told, estimate the Russian loss at not less than 8000 *hors de combat*. The French loss is about 800, the Piedmontese less than 100. General Cler, who commanded one of the weak brigades on the Tchernaya, says that his *conscripts*, as he calls them, behaved very well, and all the French are

loud in commendation of the Piedmontese. We were all confined to our camps ready for a turn out, as it was thought that an attack would be made on the trenches simultaneously, but such was not the case. I cannot understand why, for the double event was John Russo's only chance.

This morning we began a ferocious bombardment on both the Malakoff and the Redan, in order to enable the French to carry on their sap. What is to be the end I, of course, cannot say; but the Gauls seem very keen about the Malakoff, and, *coûte que coûte*, I suppose that must be ours. The enemy has evidently been misinformed about our strength and guns. The prisoners say that they had been told we could only muster 50 guns for the field batteries. The English alone have 90, the French at least 100. I saw General Simpson after the action. He observed, "This is a good business, isn't it, Higginson?" —the first words he has addressed to me.

24th.— . . . I look upon General Simpson every day with greater respect. If he were properly supported at home and invested with full and responsible authority, I think he would be as good a general-in-chief as we could wish for. I think the aspect of the siege is healthier decidedly, our fire has a dominating power which is very satisfactory, and new 13-inch mortars arrive daily. We have begun a new sap from our fifth parallel towards the Redan, but I look upon it as a feint more than as a real attack, as the Malakoff is undoubtedly the point at which we ought to go.

28th.— . . . Well, you see the attack so ardently expected by us has never come off, the big-wigs say that it will, however. Every day makes us stronger, so that the enemy had better not put it off too long. The bridge across the harbour which the Russians have been working

at so hard was finished yesterday, and strong symptoms of *déménagement* have been seen from our look-out place. Furniture of all sorts was carried over. This, however, does not necessarily imply an evacuation of the place; on the contrary, it may portend a more desperate resistance and a determination to get rid of all supernumeraries in the town so as to have only the troops to feed. We hear that their army amounts to 64,000 men. If that is really all, and they have no reinforcements on the road, the game must be nearly up.

4th September.— . . . We had a gallant thing done by one of our men last night. He saw a shell fall between two barrels of rifle ammunition from which the men in the fifth parallel were filling their pouches. He jumped forward and seized it with both hands, the fuse still burning, and threw it clear of the powder, where it burst and did no harm. Had it remained and burst where it fell, many lives must have been sacrificed. Had he been in the French army, by this time he would have been *decoré*.

7th.— . . . We are on the eve of another assault, and long before this reaches you the result will be known in England. It has been kept dark wonderfully well, and we must hope that this time we shall not fail. Our men have had two consecutive nights in the trenches, so we are by way of being in reserve. The Light Division lead with the 90th and 97th Regiments, and our signal for attack on the Redan is to be when we see *victoire assurée* on the part of the French at the Malakoff. Our shells have contrived to burn two Russian ships altogether, which is a good omen. One of them is blazing at this moment.

September 8th.—There has been a very heavy fire kept up all night, and I hear that several great fires have been

seen in the town. The wind, which is very high, may perhaps have something to do with this. I expect our men off the trenches in half an hour; they will then get some grub, clean their arms, and start back again. The Light and Second Divisions tossed up for the "lead in," and the Light won! I believe the French attack at four points simultaneously—the Quarantine, the Bastion du Mât, the Malakoff, and the Petit Redan. We take the Redan and the Cemetery. Some of the Piedmontese have come up, I believe about two companies, just to see what fighting really is.

And now I have told you all we are to do a few hours hence, and as the post won't wait for the conclusion of the spectacle, you will have the result only by telegraph. God grant us a successful issue!

The extracts from my letters quoted above may have conveyed to the reader some impression of the progress of the great siege, the measures adopted in carrying it forward, and the alternation of hope and discouragement, fluctuating from day to day, and from week to week. Munitions, which ran dangerously short more than once, had been accumulated in sufficient quantity by the end of August, and all was ready for the crowning effort on the appointed day.

The story of the capture of the Malakoff by the French and the failure of our assault on the Redan has passed into the pages of history, and no comments of mine made at the present day could be expected to affect the verdict of those who have been accepted as the impartial narrators of an event which throws greater lustre on the French arms than on our own. At the same time I claim for the version which I submit for the attention of my readers

that the orders issued by the allied generals for the guidance of those engaged in the attack of the 9th September deprived our troops, about to be engaged, of that position of equality to which, from a soldier's point of view, they were entitled, but which the claims put forth by our allies would not permit them to concede.

To those unacquainted with the technical expressions used in all engineering operations I will endeavour briefly to explain that the Malakoff Tower, surrounded as it was by a girdle of earthworks, dominated the area marked for the attack. It was an "enclosed work"; that is, one upon which an assaulting party, on obtaining possession and driving out its defenders, would have little difficulty in maintaining their hold. Free from any danger of an enfilading fire, the French were able to bring their approaches within a distance of not more than fifteen yards from the ditch of the Malakoff; a distance so short as to secure from any heavy loss a resolute assailant attacking by surprise. On the other hand the Redan, by the nature of its construction was an "open work," the defenders of which could be reinforced without difficulty, the assailants, at the same time, even after success, being exposed to ever increasing opposition. It lay at a much lower level than the Malakoff, with which it was connected by a long curtain wall and covered way. Owing to the lie of the land, our most advanced trench could not be brought nearer than three hundred yards from the "salient" or apex of the Redan, for it would be exposed to the flanking fire from a heavily-armed bastion on the right, and the fire of the Malakoff on the left. The distance, therefore, was too great to

admit of a surprise. Moreover, once the assailants had gained possession of the Malakoff, it was impossible that the enemy should maintain his defence of the Redan. Consequently, a real assault on the Redan was unnecessary, and should have been undertaken simply as a feint, in order to distract the attention of the garrison from the more serious attack on the key of the position—the Malakoff.

For confirmation of this opinion I would refer any reader sufficiently interested in the subject to the model of the siege works at Sebastopol, which lies at the United Service Museum at Whitehall, where the positions are clearly indicated.

Nor was this the only unfavourable condition contained in the orders issued to the assaulting columns. Stringent instructions were contained in these to the effect that the British assault should not commence until, by the hoisting of a flag on the Malakoff Tower, the success of the French should be announced as complete. The French attack was watched with eager eyes by the crowded occupants of our advanced trenches, impatient for the order to assault. At length the Tricolor was descried on the parapet of the Malakoff. With a dash like that of their forefathers at Badajos and San Sebastian the British column of assault advanced across the open, only to be received with such a withering fire by the defenders of the Redan, already reinforced and on the alert, that more than half their numbers fell before they reached the ditch. Many clambered to the embrasures only to be hurled back, and although some more adventurous spirits temporarily gained possession of the salient,

the large reinforcements brought up by the enemy were able to concentrate such a fire on the assailants that it was impossible to retain possession.

The order to retire was sullenly obeyed. It soon became known that the attack would be renewed on the following day, at which the troops now held in reserve would be employed. Had the force destined for the attack on the Malakoff been composed of proportionate numbers of British and French troops, the victory would have been shared in an equal degree by both armies. As on former occasions, the British Commander-in-chief yielded precedence to the French, whom I cannot blame for such a preparation for the scheme of attack as would, in the event of success, bring the larger share of credit and renown upon the French arms.

We returned to our camp in the firm belief that, together with the Highlanders, the Guards were to renew the assault on the following day. Loud explosions during the night, coming from all parts of the beleaguered town, kept us awake, and at early dawn I was walking about our camp talking to Arthur Hay,* adjutant-general of our division, and discussing with him the probable instructions we should receive from Headquarters; but even after the sun was up the violence of the explosions increased, so he desired me to get on a horse and ride down to the trenches and find out what was going on. On arrival at the first parallel I found it deserted; the whole of its occupants, together with those in the advanced works, having found their way unopposed into the already deserted town, from which the Russians had been retiring

* Succeeded as ninth Marquess of Tweeddale in 1876; died in 1878.

throughout the night, destroying their magazines and, as far as possible, rendering the town untenable. In short the town, arsenal, and the whole of the forts on the southern side had been deserted and Sebastopol was ours. Even at this early hour there were marauders in search of pillage.

A great sense of relief pervaded both armies, and it is only just towards our allies that I should record the cordial congratulations lavished by our French friends upon our men. At the moment a true sense of comradeship permitted no jealous feelings to mar these friendly relations towards each other.

Sebastopol.

11th September, 1855.— . . . It is impossible to overrate the skill and energy displayed by the French in their attack. They showed all the qualities of the first soldiers in the world, and reaped a well merited reward. At the same time, they themselves do not hesitate to admit that, had it not been for the surprise, they could never have taken this formidable stronghold. The Russian lookouts had reported in the morning an extraordinary movement of troops, and at 12 o'clock the Russian general of the day was eating his luncheon on the bombproof of the Tower, when an irruption of Zouaves and Chasseurs-de-Vincennes disturbed his repast, and before the reserves could be collected the French had possession of the place. Happily for us, the Russians had not left it open at the gorge, but had made it a closed work. Thus the French, once in it, could use it as a fortress, and the descent into the town from it being very precipitous, no efforts on the part of the Russians were sufficient to dislodge them. On the right (our right) of the Malakoff, at a work called the Petit Redan, the French were not so successful for they were driven out as fast as they got in, nor did they

occupy it until late at night when the enemy had evacuated the place. On our side, the arrangements had been made between General Simpson and General Pélissier that we were not to go at the Redan until the French announced a *victoire assurée* from the Malakoff. This proved a bad plan, as the garrison of the Malakoff retired upon the Redan and reinforced the already aroused troops in that place. The 90th and 97th led in very well, and were over the parapet in a moment; but the supports were backward.

Composed of detachments from the different regiments of the Second Division, the supporting parties had no shoulder to shoulder feeling, which exists only when entire regiments are employed. The men were mere boys, as indeed the entire English Army now is. . . . In vain did the officers jump on the parapets and try every inducement to get them on; the consequence was that the storming party, unsupported, after a desperate fight of two hours in the Redan, was obliged to retire, leaving I know not how many officers behind dead or wounded. The great difficulty at the Redan lay in there being an interior work or *réduit*, which commanded the salient in the inside, so that the danger inside the work was greater than outside, and the capture of the *réduit* absolutely necessary. This could not be accomplished unless very strong supporting bodies were at hand, which, as you already know, they were not; however, we spiked all their guns and surrounded the place no less; and towards ten o'clock at night, the French having sent down word that the enemy were evacuating the place and blowing up their magazines, the Highlanders marched without opposition into the Redan and took possession of it, finding one wounded Russian officer the only living occupant.

Nothing can be more complete and satisfactory than the way in which the Russians left the place. They blew

up all the magazines and set fire to what houses remained ; but guns, shot, military and naval stores, and every corner of the south side remains in our possession ; while the tops of the mast heads are all that can be seen of the men-of-war that have so long bid us defiance. I counted 940 new guns lying in packs in the dockyard alone ! Heaps of shot, and all the guns of the batteries besides, with their live shells and powder lying alongside of them. Altogether at least 2000 pieces of cannon of different calibre are in the hands of the allies. I passed the greater part of yesterday in visiting the Malakoff and Redan, and confess that I was perfectly astonished at the art and the perseverance they display. The engineers of both nations will do well to take a lesson from all they see in the Russian lines. I never saw such a magnificent dockyard or such beautiful barracks. In fact, so fair a prize as Sebastopol is almost worth all the trouble and loss we have sustained. The French, of course, pillaged, etc., to a considerable extent, nor were our men behindhand, such of them as could escape the Provost Marshal, but as no inhabitants were left and all valuables had long ago been withdrawn, the sacking savoured more of the ludicrous than the horrible. Still as I stood and watched the burning city, and watched the string of French soldiers carrying chairs, tables, guitars, bedsteads, etc., etc., away to their camps, while an English picket mounted police duty on the dockyard wharf ; magazines exploding at intervals, and the bell of the great church tolling irregularly as each drunken marauder pulled the wire, I could not but feel for the gallant hearts who have defended the place so long. There they were at the north side looking on at the work of destruction. What is to be done next nobody knows. Some think that the enemy will evacuate the north side also. I cannot pretend to say, but it would save all parties a deal of trouble, for they have very little to gain by staying there. The four or five steamers they

have remaining lie huddled up in a corner on the north side with their steam up. Their fate is, however, sealed, as we can easily make batteries that will blow them up. And so ends the Russian power in the Black Sea for many a long day to come.*

I have not heard of any of my friends having been hit. We were kept in reserve behind the 21-gun battery and only lost two men in the whole division.

Thus ended this memorable siege which had lasted 350 days. Our approaches, which were in many cases cut through the rock, had an extent of fully fifty miles. When the town was entered heaps of wounded and dead were found lying in stores and places to which they had been carried after the assault. The hospital presented a most revolting and heartrending sight. Between the 5th and the 8th September the Russians had lost over 4000 men without reckoning the artillerymen who perished at the guns. In the words of Prince Gortschakoff's despatch to the Emperor, "It is not Sebastopol that we left to the enemy, but the burning ruins of the town." All the remaining line of battleships in the harbour had been sunk.

Reverting to my own position for a moment, I received with unmixed gratification the news that a brevet-majority had been conferred upon me for "service in the field." The first intimation of this came to me from my father, his letter being addressed to *Major* instead of *Captain* Higginson. I also shortly after succeeded to the position of brigade major of the Guards, a new Brigade having

* Not for so very long. It was only sixteen years from the Treaty of Paris, March 30th, 1856, to Prince Gortschakoff's Note of October 31, 1870.

been formed to complete the First Division, from which the Highland Brigade had been withdrawn to join the separate command of Sir Colin Campbell at Balaklava. This new Brigade was placed under the command of Colonel Charles Ridley, who had succeeded Colonel Hood in the command of the Grenadiers. It was my good fortune to see much of Colonel Ridley, both during the war and subsequently when he was in command in Ireland as a general officer, and shall always cherish his memory with affection and respect. Lord Rokeby, therefore, now had a full division under his command, and as the troops had been released from their arduous duties during the siege, every effort was made to restore our necessarily disorganized companies to a condition which would fit them for future enterprise.

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CHAPTER XVI

END OF THE WAR

1855-6

It must not be supposed that because Sebastopol had fallen hostilities were likely to cease, for, to quote the language used by Lord Palmerston himself—"after what had occurred at Sebastopol, it was impossible that the war could be brought to any other conclusion than that which would secure to Europe safety against the future aggression of Russia."

Sebastopol, 14th September, 1855: 4 p.m.— . . . On this day and at this hour last year I landed in the Crimea, little thinking that the course of events would bring round another 14th September before I left the unfriendly soil of grim Tartary. . . . I have never been absent for one single day (I had almost said hour) from the regiment during that time; a fine field for reflection, or retrospection, or moralising, or whatever you like to call it.

September 15th.—I was startled this morning on parade by the arrival of a telegraph message from Lord Panmure * worded thus:—

"General Higginson wishes his son to accept the appointment of Assistant Adj.-General to the Italian Legion."

I have been over to Headquarters to see Barnard, who will give me good advice, for I am in a strait. I cannot

* Secretary of State for War.

quite make out whether you knew of the fall of Sebastopol when you recommended my accepting the appointment. All those to whom I have yet spoken are strongly against my taking it, Rokeby, Ridley, and others, so I am "dubersome." At this very moment I have received a note from Percy dated Turin, August 24th, offering me the post; how this has been so long in coming I know not.

I have to-day left to me to decide, and shall try and see Barnard.

18th.— . . . I have declined the Italian band. . . . I believe I have decided rightly; and certainly every one of my friends that I have consulted agreed in recommending me to decline. General Barnard was most kind, and concluded by saying—"If the case had been my son's, I should have decided for him in the same way. . . ."

20th. . . . We have this afternoon received our medals, and I at this moment wear my three clasps on my left breast; but only 200 have as yet been issued—we want about 500 more.

To revert to our prospects. It appears that the Russians are in very large force along the heights, and the general opinion seems to be that we are not strong enough to render victory certain if we attempted to storm. The French have only 53,000 effective bayonets, the Sardinians a little over 10,000, ourselves about 22,000 or 23,000. Pélissier does not now treat our General with even the semblance of equality. Simpson assembled his generals of division on the 16th, and informed them that "he was as entirely ignorant of what the plan of action was as they were; that Pélissier had not either consulted with him or given him instructions, so that all he could do was to recommend their holding their divisions in readiness for any emergency"! In the meanwhile, thanks to the *Times* and Lord Panmure, we all are set to work

road making and draining the valley of Balaklava. Not a day even allowed us to rediscipline and consolidate our sorely tried ranks, but breaking stones on the road is instantly ordered, and why, think you? Because Lord Panmure wrote to General Airey* privately, and independently of Simpson, saying, "another article has appeared in the *Times* saying the roads are not begun; woe betide you if the winter comes on and there are no roads"! This was written long before the capture of Sebastopol was known, and at a time when he (Lord Panmure) knew well that our numbers were quite unequal to the siege duties, much less to afford a brigade to make roads.

The Army Works Corps, of which you read much, is the greatest farce that ever was seen. The officers have neither experience nor the *savoir* of field life: the men, not being enlisted soldiers, refuse to work whenever the caprice suits them, and while a fourth of their numbers are sick or incapable, *i.e.* unwilling, the remainder snap their fingers at discipline and are the laughing-stocks, and at the same time disgust, of the army. I say disgust, for these drunken civilians receive more than double the pay of a non-commissioned officer, and I would stake my commission that I could bring 100 men in my own battalion that would do more work than the best 100 of them could show. Only yesterday, we had 500 men of our brigade at work on the roads; close alongside of them sat a large party of the Army Works Corps, who had struck work because they said their rations had not been properly served out; they, at the same time, being employed in cooking a very good dinner of geese, etc., which they had bought with their extra pay. Poor Simpson, who certainly is the best man we have, is not treated with the common decency due to a commanding officer; consequently each general of division considers he himself

* Quarter-master-General. Created Lord Airey in 1876; died in 1881.

is perfectly at liberty to dictate his opinion and have his own way. Lord Panmure's object evidently is to get rid of Simpson * and Sir Colin Campbell, and to shove his two protégés, Eyre and Markham, up the ladder.

I have now given you a full account of the state of affairs here. It is bold perhaps in me to speak out as I have done, but I can rely on your discretion, for I have told you one or two little things that are known to few.

29th.— . . . The Russians show no signs of departing at present, and by continually firing shell and round shot into the Karabelnaia suburb render our occupation of it impossible. This was anticipated by many, and the construction of batteries on our side was recommended before the enemy could mount guns on the north side likely to annoy us; but nothing has been done. In the meanwhile, we send down large fatigue parties daily with artillery waggons to fetch up wood and building materials for our own housing up here. . . .

I fear you are all disappointed at the Italian Legion

* Sir James Simpson's *only friend in the Cabinet* was Lord Panmure, the War Secretary. On 16th September, Lord Clarendon wrote to Lord Granville—"I am afraid that the fall of Sebastopol, with which Simpson had little to do, will make it still more difficult to remove that elderly gentlewoman from the position she ought never to have occupied. I had words with Mars [Lord Panmure] about her yesterday; but he said that if I had known Simpson as long as he had, I should be more alive to her many fine qualities. I said I could only boast of having seen Simpson once, when I was struck by his shiney forehead, his red button of a nose, his *ailes de pigeon*, his circular abdomen, and his general appearance of a major of militia or a stockbroker *en retraite*, and I thought to myself that that little old fellow never would do for Chief of the Staff; so Mars must excuse me if I was unable now to picture to myself Simpson Commander-in-Chief as anything but a round man in a square hole. To which the God of War answering, said—'Aye, aye; all that's very well; but you'll see '! " In the end, Simpson, most unfairly judged by the Home Government, resigned on 10th November the command which he had been most unwilling to undertake.

having been refused, and think "que j'ai laissé fuir mon occasion." . . . None of these legions or contingents or bands of mercenaries are looked upon favourably out here, and so universal is the feeling that they are officered (with the exception of the superior grades) by men who have been unable to continue in our army, that we do not much fancy having anything to do with them. La Marmora, I know, does not look favourably on the Italian band, the very formation of which he thinks, as do many others, to be only a political ruse to keep Austria in check. In looking back to the last war I do not find that any of the foreign troops, except the King's German Legion, ever did anything, and certainly the nearest approach to a similar corps, the Sicilian Legion under Sir J. Murray and Lord W. Bentinck, did not cover themselves with glory or benefit the cause in any way. . . . Hamilton is in orders to return to England to join the 2nd Battalion. I thus remain the last of thirty-four officers who left England on the 22nd February, '54, that is, with the battalion.

Camp, Sebastopol, October 13th, 1855.—I am very nearly frantic about that horrid *Times* newspaper and its sweeping abuse of poor General Simpson and the rest of the boat's crew. I am also curious to see what will be the result; whether our wretched Government will yield ignominiously to the pressure of these anonymous attacks and recall the Commander-in-chief, or whether, for once in a way, they will be roused into asserting their power as rulers and their opinions as men. Not one word is said about the fire of our artillery, which enabled the French to hold the Malakoff as they very fairly acknowledge; not a word is said, either, about the difference in the distance the respective storming parties had to traverse; but the whole British army is, to a man, insulted and degraded by the criticisms of a civilian. It

is a thousand pities that General Simpson did not say in his dispatch that the combination necessary for the capture of the Malakoff entailed our hazardous movement on the Redan.

We are all naturally enough astonished at Windham's wonderful promotion.* That he is an active, energetic man, there can be no doubt; but his judgment has got to be tried, and his tongue has hitherto been a most unruly member. We all expect to see him appointed quarter-master-general *vice* Airey, who at last is going home. He will not be regretted, as his temper has latterly been far too irritable for a man in high authority. . . .

We had to pay our men £2 7s. a piece yesterday in hard cash; that being the back pay of this field allowance which our wiseacres at home thought proper to bestow on their army out here. The consequence may be imagined; there being no other means of spending their money, a very Saturnalia is celebrated, and every sort of intoxicating beverage sought after with a perseverance and excess requiring the strongest remedies that discipline can provide to counteract. A more ill-judged thing was never done than ordering this payment of field allowance.

21st October.—I fear General Simpson is much annoyed at the attack of the papers; he has our sympathies entirely, and we shall be furious if this *Times* gains its point and the Government should yield. We understand that her Majesty has announced her entire confidence in him; if so, the press had better look out how it attempts to dictate the appointment of a Commander-in-chief.

. . . My love of a joke well-nigh got me into a scrape the other day; but as it has ended without any except ridiculous consequences, I must relate to you the story. You must know that L. (who is the best fellow alive) is always asking for the news, and "what's the last shave

* Afterwards Lieut.-Gen. Sir Charles Windham, K.C.B. Died in 1870.

about the Russians?" till I got so bored with this continual questioning that I arranged with Wynyard* that we would lead up in our conversation at dinner to his favourite theory, that the Russians would attempt the recapture of Sebastopol. Wynyard and I had that day been riding through the Redan, and we happened to notice some tumbrils or carts on the north side; so this furnished us with matter for "a shave." I asked Wynyard across the table what he thought they were that we saw on the north side. L. pricks up his ears. W. answers, "Oh, I don't know, perhaps rafts or boats brought down on wheels!" "By Jove," says L., "just what I said. They mean to come across again!" Well, we left the idea to fertilize in such a thirsty soil, forgetting that Willy Barnard was sitting near L. The latter, after we had gone, told Willy what we had seen, and he naturally enough mentioned it to the Chief of the Staff on his return home. The next day L. went to dine *chez* Barnard, and was asked further on the matter. He replied, of course, that he had it from very good authority, naming Wynyard and myself, that the Russians had been seen bringing boats on wheels down to the water's edge on the north side. By this time the whole of Headquarters was in excitement. Simpson was informed, and upon being told "very likely it is only a rumour"—"Na, na," said he, "the information comes from two steady men (meaning Wynyard and myself) and must be attended to." The gunners at Inkerman were cautioned, the look-out men were warned, the French mortars ordered to lay their muzzles for the opposite shore, and finally Simpson sent specially to Pélissier to inform him. He grew, as usual, perfectly frantic at the idea of receiving information from *les Anglais* instead of from his own *État-Major*, and blew up the latter in most unmeasured terms. However, not all the telescopes of the English or French look-outs

* Lieut.-Col. Grenadier Guards.

could descry anything; so, as a last resource, L., Wynyard, and myself were summoned to Headquarters by a mounted orderly in all haste to point out the place where we saw the boats! L., on receiving the order, sent for me with the utmost gravity; I could stand it no longer and roared, at which he naturally became astonished, and finally furious at finding himself hoaxed. However, the affair did look rather serious, and W. and I agreed that no time must be lost; so, jumping on our horses, we galloped to Headquarters and sought out Barnard, to whom, with *les yeux baissés* and many apologies, we related the real story. To take it *au sérieux* was out of the question, so it ended in a roar of laughter all round, with a slight recommendation to Wynyard and me to choose another subject next time! The joke is now well known all over the army, and the exaggerations are too amusing.

22nd October.—The order has been telegraphed hither to blow up the docks. They have been a long while making up their minds. It appears now decided that the whole place should vanish; the best thing, too, for so long as we attempt to hold it as a town so long will the Russians hold on at the north side from which no attack of ours can drive them. . . .

3rd November.—In the excavations necessary for the great road we are making, a new object of interest has come to light in the shape of a Greek temple. Colonel Munro of the 39th, who is a great antiquarian, has been entrusted with the task of digging it out, and he has already a hut full of vases, etc., and some coins. I believe the whole of this peninsula to be full of such-like curiosities.

6th.— . . . Yesterday our anniversary of Inkerman was celebrated by us quietly enough, by the men somewhat

noisily. Cadogan came and dined with us, and he, I, and Bob Hamilton were the three representatives of the Grenadiers of that day. Who should turn up in these diggings yesterday but Sir John Ramsden* and Mr. Christopher Sykes.† I gave them the use of my marquee last night in order that they might say they had passed a night in a tent, and they expressed themselves perfectly satisfied this morning. . . .

General McMahon‡ is a very soldierlike-looking fellow, immensely popular with the army, particularly since the Malakoff affair, and he is evidently the man they look to in the event of Marshal Pélissier going. The Imperial Guard embark for France to-day, 12,000 strong. They are replaced by the Division of General Chasseloup. The Grenadiers of the Guard won't show after ours! but the Chasseurs are nearer perfection than any soldiers I have ever yet seen, for the Zouaves can only be considered as troops for a particular climate and special service. I wish we had two light infantry battalions of our Guards, and that I commanded one. We might do anything or go anywhere.

10th.— . . . We are all surprised at Simpson going home. We only heard it announced officially yesterday, and there is a general feeling of sympathy at the injustice with which he has been treated. However, it is to be hoped that some proof will be publicly given that the attacks on the part of the *Times* have had nothing to do with his relinquishing the post. The successor is certainly the best man they could have named.§ Independently of his active habits, which stand out in strong relief to those

* M.P. Died in 1914.

† Second son of Sir Mark Sykes, third baronet of Sledmere. Was M.P. many years. Died in 1898.

‡ Afterwards a Marshal of France and President of the French Republic.

§ General Sir William Codrington, K.C.B.

of other generals, he is a perfect gentleman both in language and ideas and never loses his temper. In the relations with the French he will keep up our proper standard of importance, and get on better with old Pélissier perhaps than General Simpson, whose want of knowledge of French stood much in his way.

16th.— . . . Your letters of the 2nd November arrived to-day, and judge of my surprise when I found one among the packet addressed to "Lieutenant-Colonel H——." It was from Archie, announcing the unexpected honour which had appeared in the *Gazette* of that evening. I hope you are as pleased as I wish you to be, for "service in the field" will always carry its value, and to no one more than myself.

Colonel Augustus Foley* came out from England to take command of our Grenadiers in place of Colonel Charles Ridley. Though rumours of peace were constantly reaching us, no effort was spared by General Codrington to place the ever-increasing force under his command in a perfect state of efficiency, and I believe we all felt that our army would be perfectly capable to "go anywhere and do anything," independent of any association with our good friends the French in active operations.

The armistice which was declared on 1st March, preceding the cessation of active hostilities, enabled us to communicate at last with a certain freedom with our late foe. Interchange of expressions of goodwill between the Russian officers and ourselves was frequent and cordial, though necessarily guarded, until, in the first week in April, the news arrived that peace had been concluded. A

* Second son of the third Lord Foley. Died in 1881.

long delay, however, was inevitable before these huge armies with their stores and equipments could be withdrawn, and it would be irksome to my readers were I to recount in detail the episodes of those long winter months, albeit we found some of them exciting at the time. I still fancy that I feel the thrill of exhilaration with which, for the first time for many long months, I was able to take a long, stretching gallop through the valley of the Tchernaya, exchanging the monotonous aspect of our treeless plateau for the well-wooded meadows and picturesque scenery around the distant village of Baidar.

Our new chief inaugurated the armistice by holding a review of the cavalry and artillery in the plain of Balaklava in presence of the French Commander-in-chief and the Russian General. I was directed to attend three American officers, who had arrived some time previously as a special military mission from their Government to watch the events of the campaign, more especially with reference to siege works. The head of the mission was a Major Mordecai, whose quiet, dignified manner savoured more of the civilian than the soldier; his two subordinates, young, vigorous, and intelligent, well-equipped with the learning they had acquired at West Point, bore respectively the names of Maclellan and Lee. I little thought as I rode by their side replying to their frequent questions that, within six years, each would be commanding an army opposing the other in the great struggle between the North and the Confederate States of the South.

As the terms of peace became more generally known, the cordiality between the Russians and ourselves increased,

and excursions into the more favoured districts of the Crimea were permitted. I obtained leave for the inside of a week and started with two cheery companions to explore the southern coast, which, owing to its great fertility and delightful climate, was dotted with the residences and summer resorts of the great Russian families.

Protected from the north by the range of hills extending fully 100 miles, this belt of sheltered and sunlit land of vineyards and olive-yards could only be approached on the western end through the Phoros pass, which almost bars the high-road. Too far distant from our base of operations to fear any invasion from the enemy, the peace of this "undercliff" was never disturbed by the Allies; yet, with the exception of the two Imperial Villas Livadia and Oriandia, and Aloupka, that of Prince Woronzow, the Tartar inhabitants, who were treated as serfs by the Russians, appeared to have destroyed nearly the whole of these beautiful abodes, which had necessarily been deserted by their owners. We halted for the first night at the Villa Galitzin, which had been so effectually destroyed and pillaged that our horses were picketed in the ruins of the drawing-room, and we ourselves found more comfortable lodging in a portion of the stables which had not been unroofed. . . . On the following day we reached Aloupka, putting up in quite a tiny little inn in the centre of the little village adjacent to Prince Woronzow's grounds. Clearly his retainers were in sufficient force to maintain order and preserve his property from the devastations to which his neighbours had been exposed. Having no special permit, we did not visit the villa or palace itself, but explored the gardens and grounds which, for beauty

and extent, I have rarely seen equalled in any country. Vineyards, olive-yards, and sub-tropical plants abounded, while at one extremity of the park a mosque provided a fitting place of worship for the Moslem Tartars, while at the other extremity the classic columns of a Greek Church showed how carefully the owner had provided for the respective creeds of his dependents.

I could fill many pages with recollections of our life in Sebastopol during the winter and spring of 1856, but I doubt whether readers would find much to interest them in what occupied our time and thoughts and energies sixty years ago. Most of the memories of those days are bright and good to reflect on. Besides a mess room for ourselves and a recreation room for the men, we built a theatre and painted our own scenery, the material for which was a matter of some difficulty. Old tents were used for flies and drop scenes, damaged arrowroot, gunpowder and tooth powder for colours and medium ; but we had many artists of infinite resource ; and our dramatic recruits, encouraged by such well-known amateurs as de Bathe* and Ponsonby, gave weekly performances of *The Critic* and such like, which kept up the spirits of officers and men. I still possess the drop-curtain painted by George Cadogan with portraits of the Queen and Prince Albert. Having acted as stage-manager, I look back upon our performance with considerable pride.

For the sake of contrast I may mention one incident of a painful character ; one, moreover, which illustrates not only the unquestioning obedience of a good British soldier to the demands of duty, no matter how repugnant

* Afterwards Sir Henry de Bathe, Bart.

to his feelings that duty might be, but also, on the principle of *corruptio optimi pessima*, how one must be prepared to meet and deal with characters of the most sordid malignity, even in the best regiments. A private soldier of the — Regiment (*not* of the Guards' Brigade) was foully murdered while lying in hospital by a comrade who had been told off to attend him. The murderer was aware that the sick man kept under his pillow a bag containing all his savings of pay, which were considerable. Believing the rest of the occupants of the room to be asleep—as was his unhappy victim—the assassin struck him a blow on the temple with a hammer which at once killed him, and then abstracted the bag of money. More than one witness testified to having seen the blow struck; the murderer was arrested, tried by court-martial, and sentenced to be hanged, his crime being of so disgraceful a nature that he was denied the less humiliating fate which a firing party would have afforded him. But the question immediately arose as to how the formal execution by hanging could be duly performed. The authorities—unwisely I think—decided that a volunteer should be asked to perform the office of Jack Ketch. After some delay, a man was found who bore an indifferent character, and had been serving for some time in a corps which possessed no special *prestige*. He stipulated for a free discharge, free passage to England, and a considerable sum in ready money. Pending reference to England for a confirmation of the sentence of death, a scaffold had been erected and the efficiency of the “drop” tested daily by the hanging of a 13-inch shell, duly weighted. But whether the volunteer

hangman was overcome by shame of his office or was goaded by the taunts of his comrades, his nerve failed him, and he had recourse to drink to steady it. Consequently on the evening before the day fixed for the execution, the 23rd February, he was in a condition bordering on delirium, and flatly refused to fulfil the bargain. We had all been in hopes that so very disagreeable a business might be got over quietly in the presence of the division to which the culprit belonged, and that all unnecessary parade would be avoided, partly in consequence of the almost total absence of crime of such a nature in the army since the commencement of the war, and also because the offence was as much against social as against military law. However, it was ruled otherwise, and 500 men of every brigade had to attend with their brigade-major, too, which disgusted me horribly. The Highlanders were excused on the plea of the distance between their camp at Kamara and the place of execution: the Guards had no good friend like the "Old Man" in the Peninsula who could dare to excuse their attendance, though a like reason for their absence might have been found. The volunteer executioner having failed, the provost-marshal was informed that he must provide one. The duty roster was produced, which showed that the next man for duty was Corporal X., one of the best men on the provost-marshal's staff. He was sent for accordingly, and informed that it would be his duty to hang the prisoner in the morning. "Certainly, sir," was his reply; he saluted and turned away.

At the appointed hour Corporal X. took his place on the scaffold, adjusted the rope and performed in silence, but with perfect efficiency, his painful task. To all

subsequent inquiries he had but one reply, "It was the last bit of work I should ever have voluntarily undertaken, but I was the first on the roster for duty, and I obeyed orders."

As the day of departure drew nigh every one began collecting relics to carry home as souvenirs of the campaign, and I among the rest was on the look-out for some trophy suitable for prominent display at our home in the country. Riding through the ruined city one afternoon I observed two French soldiers making vigorous efforts to pull down a bell from the tower of the Admiralty House. The tone of the bell as it made itself heard during the process proved it to be of that careful construction for which Russian bells are celebrated. I waited till the soldiers had brought it to the ground, when I asked them what they meant to do with it. They answered rather timidly, "Nous le vendrons." Now I knew that an order was about to be issued from the headquarters of both armies to the effect that bells, as well as guns, were to be considered trophies of war, and consequently forbidden spoil for private individuals. Losing no time, therefore, I offered the Frenchmen a couple of napoleons if they would bring it the next day to my quarters, which were at too great a distance for its transport that evening. They closed with my offer at once, saying that they would find a place to conceal it in for the night. Thrusting a strong staff through the ring, they staggered off with the bell on their journey, and I watched them for two or three hundred yards well on their road. However, day after day passed and I had no news of the Frenchmen or of the bell.

About a week afterwards I was riding past the camp

of the Fourth Division, and there, in front of the quarter-guard of one of the regiments, my beautiful bell was hanging from the tripod, the sentry striking the hour of the day with its musical clapper. I rode up to the mess tent and inquired from one of the officers where they had obtained this valuable trophy.

"Oh, it was a great piece of luck for us," said my informant, "our fellows were furnishing the picket at the other end of the Woronzoff road, when the sentry on the look-out saw two Frenchmen carrying a heavy weight which at length they deposited on the ground, proceeding to dig a hole with their sword bayonets. In this way they buried their burden whatever it was, placing a small mark with the evident intention of returning to reclaim it. No sooner were they out of sight than two or three of our men went down into the valley and disinterred the treasure, which proved to be the very nice bell which you now see; we are rather pleased with it and intend to carry it home."

It was useless for me to say anything, so returned home in disgust, and had to content myself with a drum and some hand grenades.

One figure stands out in the softened light that falls on the memory of those far-off days, nor can I close the record of them without reference to her to whose resolute indifference to routine and precedent we owed the organisation of the great hospital at Balaklava. The memoirs of Miss Nightingale, so recently published, not only disclose the defects in our hospital system which aroused so much just indignation in England, but also reveal the sweeping changes which the patient and intelligent

persistence of this quiet English lady prevailed to effect in the whole of our military medical service. I look back with pride to the day when I was first presented to her, and established those respectful friendly relations which, up to a late period of her life, she permitted me to maintain.

At length, early in June, came the order for embarkation of the Brigade of Guards. As the general decided not to leave till after all three battalions were safe on board ship, he and I remained behind till the last boatload had left the shore. I then returned to the hut which my servant and I had constructed many months before, which I was now to occupy for the last time. I strolled down to the deserted camp of the Grenadiers and found my way into the mess hut, in the construction of which so much real artistic skill had been displayed. The mess-table and furniture remained just as the officers had left it in the early morning. Plates and dishes, coffee-pots, spoons, and tablecloths seemed still to await expectant guests and there was something pathetic in the consciousness which fell upon me that within a few hours all would fall a prey to a marauding Cossack or the straggling homeless wanderer attracted to the now deserted camp of the enemy.

I have omitted to mention that for some weeks previous to our departure the enclosure of the great cemetery on Cathcart's Hill had engaged the close attention of every one. To this spot, hallowed by so many memories, were brought the remains of all those who had fallen during the siege, and one is glad to know that due provision has been made for maintaining in perpetual good order the last resting-place of so many brave men. I feel

a melancholy pleasure in recording the reverent care with which, under my superintendence, our old pioneers disinterred from its first burying-place close to the mill which stood not far from the field of the battle of Inkerman, the body of our much-loved Colonel Grosvenor Hood. Placing the remains in a suitable coffin, made by our own men, we transferred his body to Cathcart's Hill.

General Craufurd and I followed the Brigade to Constantinople, where, for the first time after many months, I indulged in the luxury of a bath, such as only those who have visited the great *hamaams* at Stamboul can understand. I should mention that General J. R. Craufurd had succeeded Lord Rokeby in command of the Brigade of Guards in the autumn of 1855, and I have pleasant recollection of the days of intimacy passed with him until the end of the war. A remarkably good linguist and a close student of military history, he must certainly have distinguished himself had not the close of hostilities deprived him of the opportunity of more active service in the field. Through his connection by marriage with the family of the French General Macmahon, relations with the higher staff of the French army were rendered more cordial than ever.

Passages had been provided for us in a ship which it was expected would arrive at Malta in time for us to accompany the Brigade of Guards to England, but at the last moment our ship was ordered to take in tow an old tub on which two batteries of artillery had been embarked, and we found on our arrival at Malta that the transports of the Guards had already left three days. By the courtesy of the Admiral in command of the French Fleet

at Malta, General Craufurd and I were granted passages to Toulon on board the *Prince Jérôme*, a 90-gun ship on the point of starting with two battalions of Chasseurs à pied on their return home. I recalled with some interest the incident of my father having been taken prisoner by a French privateer named also the *Prince Jérôme*, while passing between Malta and Sicily to rejoin his battalion of the regiment at Catania in 1807.

The acquaintance which I made during the voyage with a brilliant young officer of Chasseurs ripened into a friendship which, though apparently destined to terminate at the expiration of our voyage, was strangely renewed in after years. Night after night I paced the deck with Henri de Courcy, as fine a soldier as I ever met. The younger son of a family allied to most of the historic houses of France, he preserved a charm of manner and love of his profession which, together with extraordinary good looks, soon converted our acquaintance into personal regard. When revisiting Rome immediately after my marriage in 1858, I found de Courcy serving as A.D.C. to General de Goyon, commander of the French garrison.

A rapid journey to Paris, where I remained one night to dine with our Ambassador, Lord Cowley, and so to London, where once more in the old house in Wilton Crescent I met with that welcome which only those who have been blessed with parents such as mine can fully understand.

The three Guards Battalions, disembarking at different dates, reassembled as a Brigade at Aldershot, preparatory to their return to London. We were inspected by the Queen in a somewhat informal manner, as rain was falling

heavily, but her Majesty said a few kindly words to Lord Rokeby and General Craufurd.

In the following week we made our entry into London amid a scene of enthusiasm only equalled by that displayed at the time of our departure. Detrained at Vauxhall Station, the Brigade marched over Vauxhall Bridge headed by Lord Rokeby, I as brigade major following in front of General Craufurd who still retained his command. Passing up Birdcage Walk to the tune of "Home, sweet Home!" we entered the southern gate of Buckingham Palace, and, forming column of companies, marched past the Queen and Prince Albert who, with their children, stood at the centre window.

But we had not seen the last of our gracious Sovereign, for, after proceeding up Constitution Hill through a crowd ever increasing in numbers and enthusiasm, we arrived at Hyde Park and found the royal carriages already at the saluting-point opposite Grosvenor Gate, facing which the four other battalions of the Brigade stood in line of columns, intervals being left between the regiments for the reception of their newly arrived comrades. Forming up opposite the intervals, our three battalions advanced and, by a movement now obsolete, countermarched by sub-divisions round the centre, and thus the seven battalions stood in line. An inspection of the line by the Queen, followed by a march past and a general advance in line completed the ceremony. A few kindly words of welcome from Prince Albert, and the three battalions which had endeavoured during an absence of two years and a half to uphold the dignity of the Brigade of Guards, returned to their ordinary duties as Household troops. My

duties as brigade major ceased from that moment, and, although a lieutenant-colonel in the Army, I returned to duty as a subaltern, and within three days was in command of the Buckingham Palace Guard as a lieutenant! Yet I add this with no sense of repining. Of thirty-four officers who had left England with the battalion in February, 1854, I was the only one to march into Hyde Park on this memorable occasion sound in health, with two steps of brevet-rank for "service in the field," the kindly regard of my brother officers, a fair prospect of future advancement, and, I trust I may add, deep thankfulness to the Almighty for many mercies extended to me.

My next duty was, indeed, a melancholy one, for I was appointed member of a board for the discharge of one thousand men of the Brigade, with whose fortunes and services I had for the last two years been so closely associated. It was sad to have to sit day by day for upwards of a fortnight, signing documents which turned loose upon the world, without pension or gratuity, men who had become fully qualified to take the field anywhere as tried soldiers. Before many weeks were over, many of these good fellows were wandering penniless and without employment throughout the country, illustrating with painful accuracy the truth of the bitter reflection with which Sir William Napier concludes his story of the Peninsular War.

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CHAPTER XVII

TRAVEL, MARRIAGE AND MORE TRAVEL

1857-81

NOTWITHSTANDING the endless variety of attraction offered by the London season of 1857, I became restless when I thought of the slight prospect of promotion that lay before me. I therefore sought a complete change of scene, and, to avoid the monotony of barrack-yard life, I obtained six months' leave for foreign travel. Accompanied by a very old and tried friend, Sir Archibald Campbell,* I started for Italy, and we decided on passing the winter in Rome, then still the city of the Popes, unblemished by the hideous modern streets and hotels which now disfigure the Seven Hills, and go far to obliterate the scenes to which, from time immemorial, every traveller has been attracted.

Established in a charming lodging in the Via Sistina, we sometimes hunted, sometimes rode in the Campagna. Three or four days in the week I worked as a humble pupil in the studio of a French landscape painter, Benouville, in company with Lord Somers and Sir Coutts Lindsay, both of them artists in the best sense of the word. A luncheon at Spielmann's, a gallop in the afternoon, a dinner at the English club, and a dance almost every evening, completed a frequent daily course. I found

* Third Baronet of Succoth. Died in 1866.

a very old friend in the person of Monsignor Howard, the future Cardinal, whom I had known well as an officer in the 2nd Life Guards. Through his assistance I had every facility for visiting the Vatican and all its treasures, and laying in stores of classical and mediæval knowledge, which made me forget for a time the rough incidents of my soldier life.

It is difficult for the present generation to understand the wonderful charm which Rome and its neighbourhood still retained, before the destruction of the temporal power of the Pope, which adversely affected the national taste both in reverence for antiquity and in regard for the great monuments of classic and Roman art.

At the period I speak of, a walk to the Coliseum or the Baths of Caracalla led one through green mounds of unexplored treasures. I was more than once warned not to indulge in a solitary ramble in these regions, unless prepared to be attacked. As you stood on the Pincio and looked towards St. Peter's, none of the buildings intervened which now cover the Campi. The Baths of Diocletian afforded a secluded spot both for a picnic or for an hour's meditation. The site of the present British Embassy was a wilderness, and both the Ghetto and the Ripetta provided endless subjects for the artist's pencil, though the filthy smells and uncivilised habits of the inhabitants warned the casual tourist to move warily through the narrow alleys. No public carriages stood at the corners of the streets; no tramway shocked the gaze of the antiquarian; no railway existed, and the evidence of the papal government, well-nigh a century behind that of any other in Europe, was both fascinating

and instructive to the visitor from other lands. In company with my friend, Archie Campbell, a really distinguished classic scholar, I wandered from church to church, from St. Peter's to the Lateran, and sometimes on horseback to Tivoli or Albano.

Nor was our society in the evening less interesting. The Borghese Palace was then the centre of social life. At the weekly gatherings there one met all the best of Roman society, now unhappily divided into "Bianchi" and "Neri." In those days we had no recognised diplomatic relations with the Pope; but it was customary for the secretary of the British Legation at Florence to occupy during the winter months a recognised, but non-official, position at Rome, and thus I established a friendship with Mr. Lyons, who afterwards won so much distinction as Ambassador successively at Washington, Constantinople, and Paris. He had arrived earlier than usual in 1857, in consequence of the presence of the Prince of Wales, who was making his first visit to Rome. Being only in his seventeenth year, the Prince was accompanied by his governor, General Bruce,* whom I knew well, as he had commanded a battalion of my own regiment. I was thus in frequent attendance upon his Royal Highness during his visits to the antiquities and other places of interest. Thus was begun what I venture, with all respect, to claim as the friendship which the Prince of Wales graciously accorded me down to the day of his death. Among the best-known English visitors was Lady Marion Alford,† who, together with the qualities

* Third son of the seventh Earl of Elgin. Died in 1862.

† Daughter of the second Marquis of Northampton. Married Viscount Alford, son of Earl Brownlow, and died in 1888.

of a great English lady, united so broad an appreciation of art and a taste so cultivated that all our English society responded to frequent invitations to her evening parties with a sense of more than ordinary gratification.

My intimacy with Howard led to my being accorded a private audience with his Holiness, Pope Pius IX., who had heard of my experiences during the late war, and, from his personal knowledge of a soldier's life, felt an interest in our campaign. One morning, a Papal dragoon rode to the door of my lodging and deposited a card about a foot and a half in diameter, conveying the intimation that "sua Santità" would receive me on a particular day. Arrayed in full uniform I presented myself at the appointed hour, and was ushered into the great Sala, where I found many acquaintances. The honour about to be conferred upon me becoming generally known, I met with more than usual consideration. In due course a side door was opened, and I was ushered into a small, simply-furnished room, at the end of which was the venerable figure of Pio Nono. I confess to an unusual sense of nervousness; but the genial smile with which I was welcomed soon relieved me, as I kissed the hand so frankly extended to me. As his Holiness' proficiency in French did not much exceed mine in Italian, the conversation, which ran chiefly on the French and English alliance during the late war, cannot greatly have increased his knowledge thereof. His chief desire was evidently to learn the value of the Sardinian army as soldiers, and the simplicity and directness of his language relieved me from all hesitation. After about a quarter of an hour, his Holiness concluded our conversation by expressing

a hope that Howard had put me in the way of seeing all the antiquities. My reply, "Ho trovato il mio amico un eccellente cicerone," was received with a burst of laughter, while his Holiness kept on repeating, "Cicerone, cicerone! Eccellente cicerone!" as I made my final bow and retired from the room.

On my return to the Sala, I was met by the eager inquiry, how had I contrived to amuse his Holiness so much that his laughter could be heard even through the door? On my replying that I had told his Holiness what an excellent "cicerone" Monsignor Howard had been, much merriment was aroused. I asked what was the joke, and was told that the word "cicerone" was only applied by Italians to a "laquais de place," to whom a *scudo* was an ample fee, and, therefore, hardly suitable as a description of the Pope's Chamberlain and a great Church dignitary!

The ex-Queen-Mother of Spain was passing the winter in Rome, and gave a great fancy ball at which I was present. I also recall with interest a party at the Austrian Embassy. Old Countess Colloredo, the Ambassador's wife, was a most rigid stickler for the dignity of her position as ambassadress. I was standing by her side at the foot of a sort of raised dais on which she sat at the further end of the great Sala in the Palazzo di Venezia, when three ladies, a mother and two handsome daughters, evidently English, entered at the opposite end. Turning to one of the Legation, Madame Colloredo said, "Qui sont ces gens?" The reply indicated that the secretary knew nothing but their nationality. Whether in belief that they had come without an invitation, or without presentation, Countess

Colloredo replied, "Je les arrangerai, ces dames!" The door again opened, and the tall handsome figure of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, wearing the star and red ribbon of the Bath, joined the three ladies and advanced up the room. The great "Elchi" had only just arrived in Rome on his way home to England, after what may well be called his long reign at Constantinople. Neither Roman society nor the corps diplomatique were familiar with his features, nor of those of Lady Stratford and her daughters, wherefore profound was the sensation when Countess Colloredo descended from her dais to welcome with effusion such distinguished visitors.

I had several opportunities of conversing with Lord Stratford about the late war, and on one occasion, when Queen Christina, with her daughter and her suite following her, was passing up the room, I could not help calling his attention to the extraordinary resemblance between Munoz, Duc de Rianzares, and General Williams, the heroic defender of Kars. I observed Lord Stratford's countenance to flush with apparent anger, and remembered that his treatment of General Williams had met with unfavourable criticism, owing to his alleged neglect of urgent letters from that officer while defending the city. I apologised—perhaps clumsily—for alluding to a subject which might be distasteful to his lordship, but his reply I have never forgotten, "You will hear much perhaps of those letters; it is as well that I should tell you that I only received the whole of them at the conclusion of the siege, in one packet."

Before returning to England I made a trip to Naples, and my companion on this occasion was George

Fitz-Clarence,* the most cheery of captains in the Royal Navy. We posted the whole journey, and halting for one night at Terracina (which even in our day, as well as in that of Horace, bore no very high reputation for hotel accommodation), we found every room engaged; but the landlord of this rather uninviting *albergo* told us that he had a friend with lodgings to let down a street hard by. Lighting a lantern, he conducted us down a very gloomy alley, where, at the top of a staircase, resembling a ladder, we found a room with a couple of pallets, stuffed with the outer husks of maize. My companion, evidently well read in the stories of Italian brigands, declared emphatically that nothing would induce him to pass the night in such a place, as it was evidently one of those where the "bed went down"; and it was not till after a careful examination of the floor that he consented to share the possible perils with which travellers were supposed to be still threatened.

At Naples we found Lord and Lady Holland in their beautiful Palazzo Roccelli, Mr. and Mrs. Craven (the latter to become so well known as the authoress of *Recit d'une sœur*), and the Duke and Duchess of San Arpino. I had known the last-mentioned lady as the widow of Lord Burghersh, and nothing could exceed their kindness to both of us. We also found that dear old lady who had been so kind to us in Rome, Lady Rolle. The quiet, gentle manner of Mrs. Craven, in contrast to the vivacity of the Italians, made a great impression on me.

The reign of King Bomba was already tottering to its fall, though to all appearances the Bourbon power

* Third son of the first Earl of Munster. Died in 1894.

was still maintained. I found Lyons fully employed at Naples over the unpleasant business which had arisen out of the imprisonment of two English engineers, who had been detained and were undergoing much suffering without trial. The spirit of revolution was in the air, threatening an approaching outbreak. Both the King and Queen were so strict in their views on public morality, that the *figurantes* in the ballet at the Scala were compelled by police orders to wear certain garments of a dark green colour beneath the flimsy skirts of the *ballerina*.

Much as I was conscious of having enjoyed my prolonged stay in Rome, I did not realize at the time that I had reached the turning-point of my life. It is only now, when I look back on fifty-four years of companionship, during which every thought has been shared, whether in the hour of trial or of peaceful enjoyment, that I mark with a white stone the day when I first met at Rome the dear lady who brought me all the blessings which a wife could bestow. In July, 1858, I married Florence Virginia, third daughter of the Right Hon. John FitzPatrick, Lord-Lieutenant and M.P. for Queen's County, Ireland, who, inheriting the estates of the last Earl of Upper Ossory, was raised to the peerage in 1869 as Lord Castletown of Upper Ossory. I love to dwell on that memory, but it is a subject on which I care not to think aloud. Yet I can truthfully say that, until the hour when she entered into her rest, I never sought in vain her wise counsel or sympathy.

Having at length obtained my company in the Grenadier Guards, and so attained the substantive rank of lieutenant-colonel, I found myself posted to the first

battalion of the regiment, thus quitting with regret my old comrades of Crimean days. But the link has never been completely severed; down to quite a recent date, whenever it was possible, I have visited the non-commissioned officers of the old 3rd Battalion on the 5th of November, the anniversary of Inkerman, and told the story of that memorable battle, and how that little cluster of Grenadiers so well defended their colours. Nor, let me add, did my old friends forget me; for at my wedding, which took place at St. George's, Hanover Square, I found the roadway across the street lined with familiar faces of more than fifty old comrades of the war, who had found their way uninvited to do my bride and their old adjutant honour. I believe this to have been the first occasion so agreeable an evidence of good will between all ranks was displayed, and I am glad to notice that the custom has been generally adopted. Details of wedding festivities are rarely interesting to those outside the families of the bride and bridegroom. I cannot, however, forget the kindness shown to my wife by the old and honoured Lord Lansdowne, who not only was present, but signed the register of the marriage of his cousin. During the rest of his life he was a constant visitor, and we passed the following Christmas at Bowood, where I first met the grandson, then an Eton boy, who so worthily sustains the great reputation which his grandfather enjoyed as a statesman. My recollection of that Christmas party is the more vivid because of the conversations arising out of the news which arrived of the death of Lord Macaulay. So far as my memory serves me, besides Lord and Lady Shelburne and the Comte and Comtesse

HONBLE. FLORENCE VIRGINIA FITZPATRICK
LADY HIGGINSON.



de Flahault, the party consisted of Sir David Dundas,* Henry Greville, Count Pahlen, and others who had been intimate with Macaulay. I remember listening with close attention to the high appreciation of his character as a politician and an historian pronounced by Lord Lansdowne. Although the Comte de Flahault was not thought to be easily approached in conversation, he permitted me from time to time to allude to the position he occupied on the staff of the first Napoleon at Waterloo, and I retain strong impressions of his dignified personality.

The following winter found my wife and myself settled in a charming little house in Norfolk Street, overlooking the Park, and entering fully into the enjoyment of London life.

The year 1860 is memorable in the annals of the regiment, for therein we celebrated by a great banquet the two hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the first Regiment of Foot Guards, almost the earliest act of Charles II. at the Restoration. The dinner was held in the banqueting-hall of St. James's Palace, granted as a special favour by her Majesty, the Prince Consort—our Colonel—presiding. Although his Royal Highness had attended the annual dinner of the First Guards ever since he had succeeded the Duke of Wellington as colonel, he had always confined his speeches to the narrowest conventional limits. On this occasion, however, he addressed the very large assembly in language admirably chosen, appealing directly to the highest and best feelings of his audience. It will also interest my readers belonging to the Brigade of Guards that the veteran Field Marshal Lord Combermere,

* Of Ochtertyre. Judge-Advocate-General 1849-52. Died in 1877.

who had been invited to the dinner as colonel of the 1st Life Guards, alluded to the fact that while carrying a despatch from the general to whom he was acting as A.D.C. during the campaign of the Duke of York in 1794, he came across three battalions of Guards engaged in a gallant little fight of their own against three times their number of French opponents. He referred to the battle of Lincelles, when the Brigade, unassisted, gained a victory the name of which has been borne on their colours ever since.*

In the summer of 1861 my battalion (the 1st) was ordered to Ireland, and we found ourselves stationed at the Curragh camp. Here, in the ranks of the ninth company of our battalion, the Prince of Wales acquired his earliest training as a soldier. I was acting as major to our commanding officer, Colonel Percy, my comrade of Crimean days, and under his orders much of his Royal Highness's instruction fell to my share. General Robert Bruce, who still held the position of governor to the Prince, and who, as I have already noted, had been a commanding officer in the regiment, occupied with the rest of his Royal Highness's household the general officer's quarters.

In after life the Prince gave abundant evidence of being gifted with a remarkably accurate memory. An early example of its exercise came under my personal observation at the Curragh. It had been arranged that, towards the conclusion of his stay, the Prince should present new colours to the 36th Regiment, then in camp with us. As this was the first occasion when he was to address any large assembly, a short and

* First Viscount Combermere. Died in 1865, aged 92.

appropriate speech was prepared, for the delivery of which I was to coach his Royal Highness. It was in vain that I tried to induce him to rehearse; he invariably answered, "Oh, it will be all right." Accordingly it was with some trepidation that I stood by, while the Prince for the first time as a mounted officer rode into the square of the 36th Regiment and delivered the address with perfect self-possession, and not faltering for a word. He spoke in a tone that could be heard by the assembled troops, and I felt from that moment neither his voice nor self-possession would ever fail him before any audience he might be called upon to address.

He bade us farewell with every expression of good will, and I preserve with care a beautiful pin which he gave me as I took final leave of him in Dublin.

I had hardly returned to our London house, looking forward to a peaceful winter, when the crisis was reached in our strained relations with President Lincoln's Government. The Royal Mail SS. *Trent*, on which the envoys from the Confederate States had embarked on their mission to obtain from England the recognition of the severance between North and South, was stopped during its voyage by a Federal man-of-war, a shot being fired across her bows, and the immediate surrender of the envoys, Mason and Slidell, demanded. Yielding to *force majeure*, the commander of the SS. *Trent* had no alternative but to submit. The news of this untoward event was received in England with profound indignation; the insult to our flag being too marked for usual diplomatic remonstrance. A large reinforcement of troops was immediately ordered to embark for Canada, two battalions

of Guards forming a part. The first Grenadiers and the first Scots Fusiliers received instructions to be ready to sail in less than ten days, and further that "no application for leave would under any circumstances be entertained." On communicating this intelligence, which came like a thunderclap to the well-known Dr. Greame, who was then in close attendance on my wife, he informed me in the gravest tone that he would not answer for the consequences of my leaving her at such a critical moment in her life. His opinion placed me in a terrible position. Retirement from the army when just ordered on active service was out of the question; I determined to place myself in the hands of my General (Craufurd) who had succeeded Lord Rokeby in command of the Division of Guards. He pleaded my cause to the adjutant-general with such urgency that I received permission to remain behind till my wife was pronounced to be out of danger.

Meanwhile another event occurred which plunged the nation into the deepest grief—the death of the Prince Consort. It is needless to refer at length to the loss sustained by the Sovereign and nation by the removal from his great sphere of influence of one who, by his blameless and noble life and wise council, had proved himself to be not only the most trusty adviser of the Sovereign, but an ever-loyal friend to his adopted nation. I shall not easily forget the gloom which hung over the inspection by the Duke of Cambridge of the two battalions destined for Canada, in Wellington Barracks. As I had received this special leave, Colonel Percy, my commanding officer, asked me to go to Southampton and make an informal inspection of the hired transport which was to

convey the battalion across the Atlantic in mid-winter. The St. Lawrence River being frozen, the port of debarkation selected was St. John's, New Brunswick, whence the troops were to be conveyed by sleighs to Montreal, thus avoiding the frontier line which divided Canada from the United States. I went down to Southampton and passed two days there, closely watching the delivery and stowing of stores, ammunition, and provisions on board a paddle-wheel steamer, hastily chartered by the Government from a company which was believed to have discontinued business owing to financial difficulties. The ship, though of sound construction, was totally unsuited for the conveyance of troops; it was only by the main hatchway that access could be obtained to the lower deck, and the cargo, no matter of what composed, found its way without organized supervision into the different compartments of the hold. Little seemed to have been learnt since our Crimean days, except a desire to show activity and zeal on the part of each department. The representatives of the Admiralty, Woolwich Arsenal and the Commissariat, vied with each other in activity and punctuality, but each worked independently of the others. When a consignment from one department arrived, the hour of its receipt was recorded in a departmental book, and then off went the official, his responsibility being at an end. Consequently, furs and blankets required during the voyage had to be extracted from under shot and shell; fresh provisions were carefully deposited, only to be covered up by stores which would not be required till long after the troops had disembarked. I could only look on, having no authority to remonstrate. Up to the very last moment before the

arrival of the troops, the carpenters had not completed the arm-racks, and heaps of shavings, which it was nobody's business to collect, lay around the "'tween decks," inviting that most dreaded enemy on board ship—fire. I explained the state of affairs as best I could to Colonel Percy when the battalion arrived to embark; when I rejoined him later at Montreal, he told me that the ship had been twice on fire, and that the fresh meat was in such a condition that the men only had it twice during a voyage of nearly three week's duration. The captain had previously told me that he had never mustered his crew till two hours before the troops arrived; and I subsequently heard that one of our officers, Captain Fitzroy Clayton,* well known for his proficiency in seamanship, had served as deputy to the boatswain during the greater part of that tempestuous voyage. I wrote out a semi-official report of my two days' experiences and took it to the quarter-master-general at the Horse Guards. He received and read it in silence; I retired with the unpleasant feeling that our experiences gained during the late war, dating back less than six years, had not effected any material change of system either at the War Office or the Admiralty. After a month passed in deep anxiety and final thankfulness, I embarked on board the old Cunarder *Niagara* at Liverpool accompanied by my old friend, Bob Hamilton, who had been travelling in a remote part of Italy when the official summons to join his battalion had reached him.

Meanwhile our relations with the Federal States, if not thoroughly cordial, were outwardly friendly, and enabled

* Afterwards Sir Fitzroy Clayton, K.C.B., Chairman of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

me to land at Boston and travel by the ordinary route to Montreal. The weather had been so bad that it took us nineteen days to accomplish a voyage which, nowadays, can be done within a week, and I disembarked at Boston in a snowstorm heavier than I had ever experienced. Our journey, even as far as Albany, was so delayed by snow-drift that in twelve hours we only travelled twenty-four miles, though two engines and a snow-plough preceded the one passenger carriage and the mail-van. Notwithstanding these discomforts and delays, my companion and I reached Montreal less than a fortnight after my battalion had arrived. Although, owing to the release of the Confederate envoys, all prospects of active hostilities subsided for the time, we were kept actively employed during the winter under the command of our brigadier, Lord Frederick Paulet, in training our men to the novel practice of "snow-shoeing." This was a very important accomplishment for troops, inasmuch as no movement off the track or road, beaten down hard by the action of a snow-plough, could be done in the deep snow unless supported by the snowshoe. As the field batteries arrived, the wheel carriages were exchanged for "runners"; in short, all the expedients in which the Canadians were so well versed, and which enabled them to move in the winter months, were adopted by us.

Montreal, though not the recognized capital, still maintained, both by its position and the antiquity of some of its buildings, pre-eminence among the cities of the great Province. Nothing could exceed the cordiality of the inhabitants high and low, and we soon became reconciled to our expatriation. In the early summer I

went down to New York to welcome the arrival of my wife, who had undertaken the journey alone, but entrusted to the special care of the old and well-known commodore of the Cunard fleet, Captain Judkins. She soon recovered the effects of the voyage, and after a week's rest we travelled by the Hudson River and Lake Champlain to Montreal, where I had already hired for the summer months a picturesque Canadian cottage halfway up the mountain.

The families of well-known people in the Southern States had hastily migrated to Canada during the war, and helped to form an agreeable society, which prevented our thoughts from returning too regretfully homewards. During a temporary absence on a tour of inspection of the Chief of the Staff, Colonel Wetherall, I was selected by Sir Fenwick Williams, the Commander-in-chief, to perform his, Wetherall's, duties at headquarters. Thus I became acquainted with Colonel Wolseley, then acting as A.A.G., and did not fail to note those promising gifts and sedulous attention to work of all kinds which subsequently raised him to the highest rank in our army. Of Sir Fenwick Williams, the well-known hero of Kars, I bear a recollection as of a most genial and hospitable friend. He had no opportunity for dealing with the large force of troops placed at his disposal, beyond organizing for the defence of a frontier extending over 1500 miles ; no light task, indeed, but one that called for the exercise of discretion rather than display.

The Governor-General, Lord Monck, with Lady Monck and their family, arrived from Quebec on a tour through the Western Province, and my wife and I were kindly invited to join their party. We travelled by Toronto to

Niagara where the ladies made a fortnight's stay, while the Governor-General proceeded further West. The farthest point I contrived to reach was Chicago, a city already giving promise of the gigantic proportions it has attained in subsequent years.

I also recall with pleasure a fortnight spent at Chambly at the mouth of the Richelieu River, where I was in command of a detachment for rifle practice, my wife living in a little hostelry on the Lake of Chambly; and after the day's work of rifle practice, fishing and excursions were sources of great enjoyment. It was not till the threatenings of an early winter obliged me to quit my mountain cottage for a warm house in the city of Montreal, that we began to understand the rapid transition from heat to cold of the Canadian climate. Of course a sleigh had to be provided with the usual accompaniments of buffalo robes and fur head-gear, and before Christmas time in a procession of sleighs we used to make picnic excursions which were varied by every kind of adventure.

As the days grew shorter, the well-lighted skating-rinks provided healthy exercise, and many of us became proficient in that graceful art. Nor were the long evenings necessarily dull. We arranged to rent the theatre (which would have been otherwise deserted) on very favourable terms, and many of our *troupe* of Crimean days reappeared upon the boards. Henry Ponsonby,* who had come out to command the battalion, brought his long experience as an amateur to our aid, and fulfilled the duties of stage manager.

* Afterwards Major-General the Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Ponsonby, private secretary to Queen Victoria. Died in 1895.

In short, notwithstanding the dreary monotony of six months' snow, our winter at Montreal afforded many unlooked-for attractions. Household management presented certain difficulties; the cow which provided us with milk entered the stable in the month of October and did not quit it till the following April, our beef and mutton were deposited frozen like a rock at the door, and had to be thawed with the greatest care. At the time I speak of—fifty years ago—the supply of fresh vegetables was very scant, and the tinning process was imperfectly understood. The thermometer constantly fell to forty degrees below zero Fahrenheit, yet the air was so pure and still that the extreme cold produced exhilaration rather than stupor. But I could not fail to notice that under this change of climate my wife's health was failing; and as from accounts I received from England there seemed every prospect of early promotion in the regiment, I obtained leave early in June, 1863, to return home. My old friend, Sir James Lindsay, had succeeded Lord Frederick Paulet in command of the Brigade, and I am happy to remember that before leaving I was able to hand over to him an encouraging report on a Soldiers' Institute which I had been instrumental, aided by a powerful committee, in founding for the comfort of the troops quartered at Montreal.

After an uneventful voyage we were welcomed at my father-in-law's house in Portman Square, and I call to mind with some amusement a little incident that occurred the day after my arrival. After arraying myself once again in London clothes, I strolled down Bond Street on my way to the Guards' Club. A very smart barouche was hurriedly

pulled up by a very smartly-dressed lady, in whom I recognized a former acquaintance and who beckoned to me. Feeling naturally pleased at this early greeting after an absence of two years, I went to the door of the carriage prepared to express my gratification. "Forgive my stopping you, but *could you* get my niece invited to the Guards' Ball?" and she pointed to a pretty girl who was seated alongside of her. This reminded me rather abruptly that I had returned once more to London society. My quiet reply that I had only landed the day before after a long absence, and knew nothing at all about the matter, closed the incident. As it turned out I was only just in time to join in sharing in this entertainment, which was offered by the Brigade of Guards to the Prince and Princess of Wales on their marriage. It was held in the great hall of the Exhibition buildings of 1862, which had just been closed, and has been both written and spoken of as the most magnificent fête which had been held for many a day. Families connected with the Brigade appeared to vie with each other in contributing flowers, furniture, plate, and any object which might render the huge space worthy of the reception of our royal guests. The entire management was left to a committee of officers, and it has been recorded, I believe with absolute truth, that the great buffet erected behind the royal supper table displayed antique plate and objects of art valued at two millions sterling.

Meanwhile prospects of promotion were not so favourable as I had hoped; and, beyond being employed as assistant-adjutant-general at the great annual review of Volunteers at Easter, I did not see my way to the more active soldiering which I desired.

My father's failing health and other considerations caused us to pass two winters at Cannes, then comparatively unfrequented by English, Lord Brougham being almost the only resident Englishman. However, the little colony having gained in numbers in the winters of 1865 and 1866, picnics and excursions to the islands became pretty frequent. Lord and Lady Abercorn brought the whole of their family and occupied a villa close to where we lived, and, finding several old Etonians amongst us, we manned a four-oared boat which Lord Abercorn * very kindly sent for from England for us. At the regatta held in honour of the arrival of the French fleet, we resolved to compete against all comers. Our crew was composed as follows:—

Capt. David Erskine, Scots Guards †	...	Bow
Lord Mount Edgumbe ‡	...	2
Mr. Meysey Clive	...	3
Lieut.-Colonel Higginson	...	Stroke
Captain Lord Elphinstone, R.N. §	...	Cox

The starting-point was from just in front of the Cercle Nautique, the course round the flagship, which was anchored a mile and a half out in the bay, and home to the starting-point. Though it proved to be unnecessary, as the sea was calm, we had covered our very light four-oar with canvas forward, and she looked frail among the seven boats of the French fleet which were to be our

* Created Duke of Abercorn in 1868. Died in 1885.

† Now Sir Henry David Erskine, K.C.V.O., Serjeant-at-Arms in the House of Commons from 1885 to 1915.

‡ The present earl.

§ The fifteenth Lord Elphinstone. Died in 1893.

competitors. We jumped off with a strong lead which we maintained throughout the race, and won by more than a boat's length. We presented Lord Abercorn with the prize—a large medal—which, I believe, now occupies an honoured position at Baronscourt.

The death of my father in 1866 brought into my life other interests besides those of my profession. The care of our small property in Buckinghamshire, and the duties of a magistrate, prevented me for some time from chafing under the long delay in promotion to the command of a battalion, to which I had so long looked forward. During a short stay in Paris in 1867 I was present at a great fête given by Napoleon III. to the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, in the suite of whom could be found some of the greatest notabilities of the day. Indeed this might be regarded as the Second Empire at its zenith. I recall with special interest a great ball, the last, I believe, that ever was given at the Tuileries, which for magnificence could not have been surpassed. A temporary *perron* or double staircase had been constructed from the balcony of the Salle des Maréchaux to the private garden of the palace, which was specially lighted by electricity, and the tall figures of the Cent Gardes, standing rigid and silent against a background of evergreens, added greatly to the originality of this great entertainment. The Emperor of Russia, the old King of Prussia, Bismarck and his contemporaries of other nationalities, vied with each other in deference towards their Imperial hosts. Little did any of us foresee that within three years this apparently mighty Empire was to fall, and that so complete was to be the destruction of the Tuileries, that palace so full of

tragic memories, that one visiting Paris to-day is unable to detect even a trace of its foundations.

In 1870 the Franco-German War burst upon us with a suddenness that obliged our rulers to devote closer attention to our army. Among other changes came the important one, the abolition of purchase, and with it the privilege of the double rank held by captains of the Guards, which, though conferred by the Sovereign for their special services, had always been regarded with jealousy by the army generally.

The many changes consequent gave me in 1870 the command of the 2nd battalion, the immediate cause being the death of its very popular chief, and my good friend, Colonel John Hynde King. I felt again in my element; and whether at Aldershot or London, on the Curragh or Beggars Bush Barracks, Dublin, I resumed the old habits of personal command for which my life during the Crimean war had, I hope, qualified me. In my adjutants I found able assistants, as well as real personal friends, in Freddy Stanley,* Hinchinbrook,† Antrobus,‡ and Mackinnon,§ and I rejoice to think that such friendships have, in after years, been well maintained.

In 1878 the last great brevet appeared, and on the morning after I found myself not only a major-general, but already nearly half-way up the list of officers of that rank. My position was somewhat compromised by this unlooked for seniority, but my anxiety was relieved

* Succeeded in 1898 as sixteenth Earl of Derby. Died in 1908.

† Succeeded as eighth Earl of Sandwich in 1894. Died in 1916.

‡ Succeeded as fourth Baronet in 1899. Died in 1916.

§ Now Lieut.-General Sir W. H. Mackinnon, G.C.B.

when H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge graciously informed me that I was to command the Guards and the Home District. I look back to that period of command, which extended over nearly five years, as the happiest period of my Guardsman's life. With such men on my staff as Paul Methuen,* Lorn Campbell,† North Dalrymple,‡ and Vesey Dawson,§ for whom, both as my nephew and as A.D.C., I have always entertained the most affectionate regard, I was never at a loss for the co-operation, respect, and friendliness which enabled me to maintain the efficiency of the Brigade at the high standard merited by its traditions.

Much occurred which rendered the position occasionally one of difficulty. The Volunteer movement had not as yet found complete favour with the higher authorities, and there were times when my royal Chief yielded with reluctance to my assurance that this large and enthusiastic force might be trusted under any emergency. As an instance, I recall the difficulty in which the Chief Commissioner of Police, Sir Edmund Henderson, found himself on the occasion when her Majesty reviewed the Brigade of Guards on their return from Egypt after the first expedition in 1882. It had been arranged that the Queen was to come direct from the Palace to the Horse Guards' Parade, where the review was to take place, and due preparations were made, both by police and troops, for lining the route. At the last moment

* Now Field-Marshal Lord Methuen, G.C.B.

† Now General Lorn Campbell.

‡ The Hon. North H. Dalrymple, M.V.O., Scots Guards, second son of the tenth Earl of Stair. Died in 1906.

§ Nephew of the first Earl of Dartrey.

the Queen determined to proceed by Constitution Hill, Piccadilly, and St. James' Street, this lengthened route involving a much larger force of police than the Chief Commissioner could provide. He came to my office requesting 2000 additional troops to line the streets. I had not nearly sufficient force to supply this demand, and had some difficulty in persuading the Duke of Cambridge to allow me to employ the Volunteer Force, his objection arising from the indefinite position which the Volunteers must hold if called upon to aid the civil power. I summoned the commanding officers and explained the necessity for the exercise of tact, pointing out at the same time how favourable an opportunity presented itself for giving proof of the efficiency of their respective commands. The result was most satisfactory. The great crowd treated with cordial respect the evident efficiency of their citizen soldiers.

Reverting to 1881, I was suddenly called upon by the Duke, as colonel-in-chief of the Guards, to go over to Dublin and take command of the two battalions there in accordance with the standing orders of the Brigade, which lay down as an invariable rule that when two or more battalions are serving together, either during peace or war, they shall be commanded by a general or brigadier of the Brigade. The necessity for keeping the extra battalion in Dublin ceased in a couple of months, and I returned to my command in London.

When, in 1882, an entire Brigade of Guards embarked for Egypt, as senior Guards' general I naturally expected to command. After many days of suspense, I was summoned to the Duke's room, when his Royal Highness, in

kind and sympathetic language, informed me that it was the Queen's wish that H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught should have the command. Whatever may have been my disappointment, I feel bound to admit the absolute justice of her Majesty's decision, and I have no hesitation in recording the facts, whereby my prospect of commanding a Brigade of Guards in the field came to an end, because the unvarying kindness bestowed upon me by the Duke of Cambridge and the Duke of Connaught in subsequent life seemed to imply their appreciation of this heavy blow to my legitimate hopes. I retained, therefore, my home command, and was thankful to find that, neither in my office at the Horse Guards nor among my many friends, had this check in my career affected their personal feelings towards me.

A complete change of scene served to mitigate the rather severe trial I had experienced in bidding farewell to my comrades.

On the same evening I travelled to the north of Scotland with my wife and daughter, looking forward to a tour of visits as a wholesome change. Occupied to the last moment at my office, I had no time to change my clothes before meeting my wife at Euston Station. We travelled all night, and after a twenty-five mile drive from the station where we arrived, we were met by our kindly host, not only with a welcome, but with the announcement that several stags were crossing the head of his glen on their way from the Black Mount to a neighbouring forest, and that if I wished a chance of obtaining a good head I must be off without a moment's delay. A light trap was immediately provided, and, only changing my London hat

for a soft cap, I started at once. A three mile drive, a sharp walk with the stalker (for which my London boots were very unsuitable) and a crawl up a rocky burn, brought me within a hundred yards of the foremost of the travelling deer. Good luck directed my shot, and the best head that had been got for many seasons fell to my rifle. Twenty-four hours had not passed since I was crossing the Horse Guards' Parade somewhat despondent. The hillside, the mountain air, and the success which attended this, my first stalk, had a magic effect in dispelling the gloom from which I had suffered during the last week.

Resuming work after a pleasant holiday, I next recall having been selected in the summer of 1883 as the general officer ordered to attend the manoeuvres of the French army; and this brings to mind a little incident illustrating the kindly thoughtfulness which gave such a personal charm to our late King Edward, then Prince of Wales. I had been staying for a few days with my old brother officer, Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, at Government House, Portsmouth. We were just sitting down to luncheon when the Prince arrived from Osborne rather unexpectedly. I told him of my mission to France.

"What uniform will you wear?" said H.R.H.

"My blue coat, Sir, and cocked hat," I replied.

"Of course then you will wear your Legion of Honour."

"Only the ribbon, Sir."

"I do not approve," said H.R.H. "When in uniform in France you should wear the Cross of the Legion of Honour. Have you a miniature one?"

I was obliged to confess that I had not. Taking out

his pocket-book the Prince said: "Where do you start from and when?" I replied that I had directed my Staff to meet me in Paris at the Hotel Chatham on a certain date. The Prince made a note and the subject dropped. On the morning after my arrival at the Hotel Chatham in Paris I was sitting at breakfast with my three Staff officers, when a visitor was announced who, on being introduced, presented a little leather case containing a miniature Legion of Honour set in diamonds and emeralds which he delivered to me "de la part de son altesse Royale le Prince de Galles." Such an instance of thoughtful kindness can never be effaced from one's memory.

Our manœuvres began on the southern slopes of the Argonne near the town of Vouziers, and for upwards of a fortnight we moved from position to position, sometimes against an imaginary enemy, more often against troops told off as an opposing force, through the wooded country on the left bank of the Meuse; the concluding event being a review of the entire force of about 30,000 men on the riverside plain close to the town of Stenay. This was the occasion of my first acquaintance with Herbert Stewart, who had been appointed to my Staff as a captain of cavalry, and whose charm of manner and quick appreciation of every detail valuable to a soldier, gave promise of that brilliant career which, in less than two years, was cut short in the Egyptian desert.

A young captain of French cavalry attached to me as aide-de-camp, has since won distinction as General Lyauty, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in Morocco.

It was at Stenay, as I have said, that the manœuvres came to an end. General Chanzy, beside whom I happened

to sit at dinner on the last evening, told me of an incident which gives peculiar historic interest to that place. There was stationed here in 1791 a regiment of light cavalry, still loyal, which had been ordered to send a troop to Varennes, a few miles distant, there to await the arrival of Louis XVI. and his family in their flight from Paris, and escort them to the frontier. Unfortunately the excellent cuisine of the principal inn at Stenay tempted the officers of the escort to be an hour late in starting, so that the royal fugitives fell undefended into the hands of their enemies. It so happened that the hotel afore-said, where our banquet took place, was still managed by the descendants of those who held it in 1791, and we had ample reason to appreciate the hereditary skill in the art of "le grand Vatel," which had remained undeteriorated in the family for more than a century.

I cannot leave the subject of the manœuvres without allusion to my Russian colleague, General Luboudski. We used to wander about late at night comparing notes about the siege of Sebastopol. He spoke with singular modesty of his personal share in the defence so ably conducted by Todleben, and though I saw that he carried the double cross of St. George, he never told me how he had twice acquired that much-coveted decoration. It was only a year afterwards, when we met at the Russian manœuvres, that I learnt the true story. At a certain informal gathering of officers the Emperor appears to have overheard the conversation which turned upon an act of rapid decision and high courage on the part of Luboudski, then a captain—by which he extinguished the fuse of an enemy's shell about to burst amidst a

large company of officers, whose lives were thus almost miraculously saved. Someone inquired why this act of gallantry had not been noted, for which no explanation could be offered, except that fighting was incessant and no opportunity presented itself for a special recognition. At the next general parade of the St. Petersburg garrison, which took place every Sunday before the Emperor, his Majesty ordered the officers' call to be blown, and related to them the story that he had overheard, then, calling General Luboudski to the front, he detached the cross of St. George from his own uniform and added it to the similar decoration which the general had already acquired on the field of Plevna.

CHAPTER XVIII

A VISIT TO RUSSIA

1884

In the year 1884 I had the opportunity of comparing the troops of our old enemy, the Russians, with those of our old ally, France, which I had seen in 1883, having been honoured by an appointment to attend the manœuvres of the corps of the Russian Guard, on the special invitation of the Emperor Alexander II. Although the presence of the Emperor and Empress, surrounded by officials of State, deprived these manœuvres of much of an instructive character, still I managed to gather some valuable information about the military and other resources of the mighty Empire; and, personally, I enjoyed the privilege of making acquaintance with some of the most distinguished soldiers and statesmen who formed part of the Imperial *entourage*. It proved a strenuous experience, whereof I may best give some impression by quoting from letters written to my wife at the time. In these letters, of course, I have avoided professional criticism; but I must preface the extracts by describing the impression I received from the general appearance of the troops of the Russian army.

At the great camp at Krasnoe Seló, which corresponds with our Aldershot, we found 56,000 men of all ranks, of whom at least 40,000 were of the Guard. Nothing can

exceed the stately and soldier-like bearing of the Garde-à-Cheval and Chevalier-Garde, by which names the Household Cavalry are known. They can fairly claim to rival our Life Guards. The infantry soldiers are of large stature, are well fed and cared for in camp and barracks, and their countenances give evidence of contentment, while discipline is easily maintained. The Artillery can boast special claim to notice. The horses, though small, are swift, active, and capable of much endurance; and the gunners proved themselves to be highly instructed, and confident in the value of their rifled guns. No pains were spared, no details neglected; and the value of concentrating large bodies of troops for occasional manœuvres on a large scale, commended itself much to the minds of all foreign visitors. From the Emperor we received most royal and gracious hospitality; and from the officers generally we experienced the same unvarying cordiality, which made us feel that we were living amongst comrades.

Grand Hotel de l'Europe, St. Petersburg.

11th August, 1884.— . . . Our journey, though very tedious after entering Russia, was uneventful. Our sleeping cars from Berlin to the frontier were noisy, hot, and disagreeable. At the frontier (Wirballen) station we secured others and found the Russian sofa-beds much the best. We never travelled more than twenty miles an hour, and our halts were frequent and long. From the moment we crossed the frontier, tea became our beverage, and the samovar smoked in readiness at every station, however small. Bread good; a sort of soup, in which, among no end of vegetables, cabbage was the most easily recognized, was really not bad; and my colleagues seemed

to find the beer good. We had Colonel Chenevix Trench, the military attaché at St. Petersburg, with us; and as he can speak Russian, he was of very great use, and has become a pleasant addition to our party. The country we traversed is as flat as Salisbury Plain, and absolutely without interest, save in the names of a few towns like Wilna, Pskof, Dünaburg, etc., each of which brings some historical incident to one's memory. After a short halt at Gatschina, where we substituted undress uniform for our dusty travelling clothes, I could see the cupola of St. Isaac's Church, a golden speck in the distance; and after another quarter of an hour, found myself bowing and handshaking with various tall figures in uniforms of varied hue, but of unquestionably Russian type. A gorgeous Court footman, in an orange-and-red great coat and cocked-hat, seized my bag and cloak; others surrounded Rowland, my servant; while Colonel Low* and Captain Davidson† were similarly looked after. Passing through the royal waiting-room, I was handed into a very pretty victoria, drawn by two black long-tailed steppers, and with Captain Count Stenbock of the Garde-à-Cheval, who was to be attached to me during my visit, by my side, was whisked off through the broad uninteresting streets of the suburbs to this hotel.

Camp, Krasnoe Seló.

*Aug. 11th, 1884 (July 30th, Russian time).—*In three-quarters of an hour we had to be ready to dine with the officers of the various missions. . . . I found myself for the moment the senior of the assembled party, as Prince Windischgrätz, who is a Feld-marschall-lieutenant of the Austrian Army, and the French general and German general, who are my seniors, had not arrived.

* Afterwards Sir Richard Low, a distinguished officer of Indian cavalry.

† In the Royal Artillery. Married Lady Theodora Keppel, daughter of the seventh Earl of Albemarle.

As soon as dinner was ended, and coffee and cigarettes discussed, the carriages came round, and we started for a drive to the islands which lie between the branches of the Neva. The air was refreshing, and of course in this northern region, though it was 9.30, there was a twilight which was sufficient to enable one to see without difficulty; and the appearance of the huge buildings, especially the thin spires of the church of St. Peter and St. Paul and the fortress on the first island, cut out as they were in sombre outline against the clear northern sky, was not without a certain charm. Our drive did not end thus sentimentally. On the further island, and on the northern bank of the river, is a sort of *lust-garten*, called Livadia. Here we alighted, and found ourselves among coloured lamps and crowds of the bourgeoisie regarding with admiration four female gymnasts, who were tying themselves in knots, and hanging from ceilings by their feet. Passing by this we reached a pretty little theatre, and from a smart box witnessed a very fair representation of *La Fille du Tambour-Major* by a French company. This lasted an hour, and on going out we saw at another stage in the gardens a company of Bohemians in Russian costume, singing Russian national and gipsy songs, amid the rapt silence of the crowd. But these were said not to be the best Bohemians; so we were taken on to another café, where, in a rather low and stuffy room, we were treated to real Bohemian choruses. These singers—about a dozen men and the same number of women—were not in costume, but sang with wonderful taste; and though the extreme plaintiveness of most of the songs, sometimes varied by bursts of wild appeal, all in a minor key, gave a weird character to the entertainment, the interest it aroused was (to me at least) so great that I forgot all fatigue. . . . And so at last homewards; the horses galloping through the now empty streets and over the bridges, the view from which at night of the

Neva and its well-lighted quays is really splendid. To bed at 2.30. Our orders were to dine next day at 12, and go by train to Krasnoe at 1.30—all our luggage going at 10.30. So after coffee, and packing off my servant with orders to have our red coats ready for us on our arrival at the camp, I went to call on Sir Edward Thornton, our ambassador. . . . Returning from the Embassy, I found all assembled for an early dinner, for which no one had much appetite, and then we all started *en cortège* for the trains, and were taken great care of by Prince Obolensky, the Grand Marshal of the Palace. On arriving at Krasnoe, more carriages and footmen. My vehicle is number eight, with two fiery little horses. We reach our quarters on the hill near the Emperor's pavilion, and I find myself in a nice little apartment, bedroom, sitting-room, and servant's-room—all *sous la clef*—four other generals being in the same house. Our luggage is late, and we have only three-quarters of an hour to get ready to join the Emperor's party on his Majesty's state entry into camp.

We got our luggage at last, and in full *tenue* proceeded to call on the Grand-Dukes Nicholas, uncle, and Vladimir brother, to the Emperor. Prince Windischgrätz headed us; General de Miribel, the Frenchman, followed; I came next, followed by General Leczinski of the German army, each general followed by his staff, and so on. We found the Grand-Dukes on the balcony of their wooden pavilion, and formed a line or semicircle. They came round and spoke to each general. My Crimean medals, of course, attracted notice, and the Grand-Duke Nicholas alluded rather nicely to our having been *vis-à-vis* to each other in Sebastopol. When this was over, we found in the main street, which traverses the whole line of pavilions, horses and orderlies; and we mounted at once. Meanwhile the street was being lined with troops on foot without arms, from the Emperor's pavilion towards the camp, and the General Staff of the Russian army, headed by the Grand-Dukes

and the Minister of War, formed in line opposite to us on either side of the street. The variety of uniforms, and the great names of some of the wearers, gave a certain impressiveness to the scene. . . . All this time the troops were singing, and the singing became a shout as the carriage of the Empress, drawn by four white ponies, appeared, with the Emperor riding by her side. We followed, and thus reached the camp, where the whole of the troops were formed in line four deep in front of their tents. Each battalion took up the shout as we passed—a low hoarse hurrah. We rode at least a mile and a half past the line of tents, and must have seen 50,000 men. The ground is prettily *accidenté*, and altogether well suited for camp purposes. At the end we came upon the Guard Regiments and the Préobrajensky Regiment, with whom finished the inspection; and here were assembled all the bands and drums, to the number of 800, in one compact mass facing the Empress's pavilion or tent, at the door of which she and her ladies alighted, and were joined by the Emperor and Grand-Dukes. We all dismounted and came inside the square, of which the royalty and staff formed one side, the musicians the opposite side, the other two sides being composed of officers of the various corps who had hurried to the spot. In the centre, on a mound, stood the conductor of the united bands of music, and near him one drummer-boy (or perhaps a lad of twenty), of whom more anon. We (the foreign missions) stood in line, and the Emperor came down from the pavilion and spoke to each of the generals. He was very gracious to me, and inquired about my service and the commands I had held. This over, he stood alone in the centre, and a detachment of sergeants in full marching order passed him one by one, each sergeant giving the evening report of his picket and of the usual "watch-setting" in a loud voice, the Czar thus fulfilling for the moment the rôle of camp-commandant. We (generals only) were then taken

up, one by one, to the Empress, who talked to me about the Princess of Wales, Cowes, Osborne, etc., and was altogether gracious and charming. Then tea was handed round, and the crowd of officers and of the troops generally kept closing round the square as the hour for "the retreat," or Zaira, drew nigh. Meanwhile, heavy clouds had gathered on the horizon and a storm seemed to threaten us, though the view down the slope and over the valley to Krasnoe, was not rendered less beautiful by the combination of waning sunlight and threatening clouds. Eight o'clock sounds; each field-battery fires an evening gun; three rockets shoot into the air, and the drums and bands roll out, with a solemnity and volume of sound not easily forgotten, the evening hymn. As the last notes die off, the drummer-boy steps forward, the bandmaster descends, and the little drummer, sole occupant of the square, repeats slowly but with perfect distinctness the Lord's Prayer. Every head is uncovered and bows, from the Emperor to the furthestmost spectator; and I should from my heart pity the man who, as the little lad's "Amen" went up in its solitary simplicity, could fail to be impressed by the scene.

. . . The bands then burst forth with the Russian national air, so well known to all of us, and the scene closed as night fell.

Our carriages came up, and we raced home—no, *not* home—for there was a gala performance at the theatre, and we were driven straight there, and sat three mortal hours listening to a Russian play. The Emperor and Empress and Grand-Dukes were all there, and remained for a ballet; after which we supped at the Emperor's pavilion, and I was placed next a nice little *dame d'honneur*, who was an enthusiastic admirer of George Eliot's works; and when I told her I had known Mrs. George Henry Lewes, she seemed to look on me as a very privileged person indeed. I was starving, not having tasted food

since our dinner in St. Petersburg at twelve, except the Empress's tea at the "camp retreat."

It was 1.30 before I got to bed. I was certainly tired, and hoped for a good night's rest before the great review which was to take place next day. I had been asleep about an hour and a half when an orderly arrived who woke the servants and bade us all turn out, as there was an *alerte*. Disbelieving my servant, I tried to court once more the drowsy god, when in rushed Count Stenbock confirming the announcement, and that we were all expected at the Quartier Général in ten minutes. I need hardly say that I was dressed in no time, and that we started at 4.30 at a brisk canter across the plain, and were all in our places in front of the Emperor's pavilion in good time. Meanwhile the troops had hurried into their positions, and the Emperor, mounting a small grey barb, rode down the line saying, "Good morning, my children," to each regiment, to which the men shout reply in unison. After the inspection came the march-past; and as there was fully 50,000 on the ground, this was a long affair, and the morning air struck chill upon us all, besides the annoyance of the dust, which absolutely smothered us. But the appearance and bearing of the troops were superb, and merited praise all the more owing to the alacrity with which they had turned out at so early an hour. We were home by nine o'clock, much interested by all we had seen, but very cold and hungry. Luncheon at one o'clock, and then we passed the whole afternoon driving about, paying official visits to generals and heads of departments. Happily the visiting consisted in leaving cards, but it is *de rigueur* to do this in state, so I donned a cocked hat and we drove *en cortège*.

Dinner at seven o'clock. I was next to a very agreeable Princess Kutusoff. I was rather tired, but ashamed of being so, as no one is tired, apparently, in this country. Afterwards to the theatre, this time *La Mascotte*, in French.

very well given and very amusing. It was 1.30 before I could get to bed. It appears this Czar had never given this *alerte* before, though the late Emperor was very fond of taking people by surprise. Even the Minister of War, General Vannowsky, told me that he knew nothing of it till after two o'clock on the same morning.

Next morning, the 13th, was the *bénédiction des drapeaux*, a most interesting ceremony, which takes place twice a year. This time, fortunately for me, and indeed for all, it was at eleven o'clock, so that we were not obliged to turn out before a reasonable hour. In full dress we waited for the Emperor and Empress near a little chapel on the edge of the lake hard by. Detachments of picked men from every regiment, with the standard or colour, were ranged in double line.

The whole Imperial family went down the line and into the chapel, which was open at the sides—that is, was only pillars and roof. Popes and priests, and the choir of the loveliest voices I ever heard. A long service, very sweet and solemn music, all of us bareheaded. Then they all returned to the steps of a pavilion, and the detachment marched past: the Empress received the report of the day of her regiment, the Emperor of the others; and so home to breakfast or luncheon, where again I found myself next Mlle. Kutusoff, and on the other side a nice Baroness von Hinüber, who belongs to the ex-Hanoverian Court, and is here with one of the Hanoverian princesses. After luncheon a series of official visits to members of the Imperial family—cocked-hat again! We had to write down our names some twenty or thirty times, and leave two or three dozen cards on the courtiers, and then our official visits were, I think, fairly accomplished! I was glad to get back to my quarters.

This morning (14th August) we were up at seven. Off at eight on wheels to the plains, where we found our horses; and when the Emperor joined us, we witnessed

a very interesting field-day on a small scale, real shot and shell being used against an enemy represented by dummies or painted figures life-size. The whole thing was well done and highly instructive. Then home as hard as we could drive, as I had to breakfast at mid-day with the Emperor.

The rooms are small, for the present Czar will not use the large pavilion where his father was wont to live, but keeps to that which he had when Czarowitch. So only the heads of missions were invited. The Emperor was very civil, talking to each of us. . . . Coffee and cigarettes in the garden, a band (which played, by the way, "Am Meer"), Circassian sentries, Emperor and Empress moving about—you will understand the scene—then home.

15th. . . . This morning at 8.10 off to the same ground, for a field-day of the line's infantry and artillery. Not bad on the whole, and the ground very well suited for such a display, the morning air deliciously cool and refreshing. Home to breakfast at twelve. At two, inspection of the École de Cavalerie and the Écoles d'Équitation and d'Infanterie. Then I went to see my old friend and colleague General Luboudski, who was delighted to show me his beautiful regiment of the corps of Grenadiers. I had a good look at everything, down to the canteen and kitchen, and was very much interested. . . . As I walked amongst the men, he whispered to me to say to them, "Sdārōva," on which they all shouted some words which meant "Welcome!" Then home to rest and to dinner. I declined the play to-night, it being a Russian piece. . . . After dinner I was glad to renew acquaintance with Détaille, the French painter, who is here on a special engagement to the Emperor to paint military subjects. His works are well known, and he has often been in England. . . .

St. Petersburg.

Sunday, 17th August.—I went this morning to the Kazan Cathedral, and then to St. Isaac's, of which I will not

attempt to give a description, though it merits one. I shall visit it for its architecture again. To-day I went for the church music, and indeed the choir is heavenly. Never did I hear anything to equal it: the boys' voices so pure, the altos so clear and bright, the basses so deep; time and tune, harmony and taste, all far beyond any church singing I had ever heard. No instruments. . . .

St. Petersburg.

August 19th, 1884 (Old Style, August 7th), 6 p.m.—We reached the camp at 5.30 on Sunday afternoon, and were taken straight to the Imperial stand, into the state tribune, to which we generals were specially admitted. The racing was amusing, officers and Cossacks riding their own horses. The Empress came across the room and talked to me a long while about her sister and England, and seemed interested to hear news of people she had known. The Emperor, too, talked a little, and many of the Grand-Dukes. At 7.30 I thought we were going home to dinner; but we were driven to the theatre instead, where we heard *La Mascotte*, with long intervals between acts, till nearly twelve o'clock. One of the Dukes of Leuchtenberg sat in the next stall to me, and we talked a good deal; but I was growing ravenous with hunger, for I had had nothing since midday except a cup of tea in the tribune, which I had to put down only half tasted, owing to the Empress coming over to speak with me! At 12.30 (p.m.) we were taken to the large pavilion, but could only get a little chicken and *zakuska* and some tea. However, I ate like a ploughboy, the French ambassador alongside of me being in the same plight—then to bed.

Up early, as everything had to be ready for a move—some of our luggage to go off to Narva, and the rest, with ourselves, to go to St. Petersburg. Meanwhile we put on full dress for the Préobrajensky fête, and at eleven o'clock were driven over to the camp of that regiment, and witnessed

a very interesting parade before the whole Imperial family. Popes, altars, vestments, and sweet music; then the regimental pope blessed and sprinkled the Imperial family, and then marched down the ranks and blessed the men. After that, a march-past and a visit to the camp and the men at their dinners, and hurrahs from every one as the Empress drank to their health. Next came a tremendous breakfast or dinner at the pavilion, the whole of the officers being invited, besides the entire Court. We sat down about 450; all the arrangements were complete, and the dinner hot and well served. On my right hand was the Princess Marie of Hanover, and on my left the Princess Kotchoubey, who is the head of all the ladies of the Court; she was pleased to be gracious to me, and talked a great deal. . . .

The Emperor rose towards the end of dinner, and called upon all to drink to the health of the Emperor of Austria, whose birthday it was. We then drank to the health of the Préobrajensky Regiment, and then the Imperial party rose and stood about and drank coffee. I was in close conversation with some one of the generals, when the Grand Duchess Serge (the bride) * came across the intervening space and did me the honour to converse for some time about her mother, and the Queen, and of England. It was so touching, and altogether so indicative of a desire to speak with some one who, at any rate, could refer to persons and places which reminded her of her childhood.

By this time it was four o'clock. We foreign generals had then to be presented to the little Grand-Duc Héritier or Czarowitch, at his own pavilion. He seems to be a nice lad, very quick and intelligent: he spoke English with a very pure accent. . . . Arriving in St. Petersburg, I went off at once to see the Winter Palace, and was shown all over that most extraordinary building, which is about five times as big as Buckingham Palace, and ten times more

* Daughter of Princess Alice of Hesse.

magnificent. I was shown the cabinet of the great Emperor Nicholas, in exactly the state as he left it, for the bed remains in which he died, and all his things are lying around the little low couch, which was all he indulged in. But the objects of interest are endless; though I admit that my sense was shocked when, in the corner of the *cabinet de travail* of the late unfortunate Czar, I was shown the bed on which he expired in agony, and the *gardien*, lifting the coverlet, pointed to the mattress saturated with blood, and left just in the condition in which it was when the poor Emperor breathed his last.

This morning (Tuesday, 19th) we started at nine o'clock on board an Admiralty steamer for Cronstadt. Our ambassador, Sir Edward Thornton, joined the party, and I had a great deal of interesting conversation with him during the voyage out and home. It takes one hour and a half to go down the Neva to Cronstadt; and though the banks of the river are flat, except where you see on the left bank the woods of Peterhoff and Oranienbaum, there is a certain grandeur in the river, owing to the great mass of water. At Cronstadt we were taken to see batteries and guns, and forts and turrets, and finally were entertained at luncheon by the marine officers, and returned to St. Petersburg at six o'clock. Mr. Albert Brassey's yacht, the *Czarina*, was lying off Cronstadt, and very well she looked.

Gomontovo, half-way between Krasnoe Seló and Yamburg.

August 21st, 1884.—We left St. Petersburg yesterday by train at 9.30 and stopped at the second station beyond Gatschina on the Baltic line of railway, where we found carriages, which, after a drive of 20 versts, brought us here. This is a fair specimen of a country gentleman's house—not a *château*, but a good, comfortable house made of wood, with good rooms fairly furnished. It belongs to Baron Veglio, and has been placed at the Emperor's disposal for three days as his headquarters. The weather,

alas! has become unfriendly to us, and we arrived in a heavy storm of rain, and had to wait two hours for our baggage. But it was amusing to watch the Emperor's *fourgons* with the *équipage-de-campagne* arrive; and I must admit that they well understand how to improvise even an Imperial camp. The Emperor's and Empress's camp-beds were unpacked and settled up on a room on the ground floor, the Grand-Duc Héritier being next door. Then there was the travelling plate, all in special boxes, silver mugs instead of glasses, and no china at all. Outside in the park or enclosure, fifty yards from the house, two large and twelve small tents had been pitched, where the generals dine and the minor officials sleep. I and the French general *en mission*, De Miribel, share a room in the house; and in the same passage with us, in little rooms, are the Grand-Dukes, the Minister of War, and the other foreign generals. My French colleague is very cheery, and sleeps like a top; I only wish I could sleep half as well as he does. We are at this moment seated opposite to each other at a little table, he on a chair, I on my bed, each writing to his wife!

At six o'clock we had an excellent dinner in the large tent (which, by the way, was used by the late Emperor through the whole of the Plevna campaign), though we all wore our cloaks and forage-caps, on account of the cold and rain. At eight o'clock the Emperor and Empress arrived from Peterhoff, and we saw no more of them till this morning, when at nine o'clock we started for the opening scene of the manœuvres. The idea is simple: a force having landed near Narva threatens the capital; a smaller force, representing the garrison of St. Petersburg, opposes, in order to hold it in check till reinforcements arrive. I may dismiss the subject of this display, for what we saw to-day was not worth seeing,—the commanders on either side seemed afraid of doing anything. The Empress rode, notwithstanding the rain; and after

three or four hours we returned, and then we generals had to join the Imperial party at breakfast. I sat next the Prince of Oldenburg, who likes talking English, and has a frank and soldier-like manner. We had a long conversation on wolf-hunting; but tell Gladys * I have seen no wolves as yet, though they say there are some not far off.

It has rained hard ever since. If the weather continues bad, and the manœuvres are not of a more interesting kind than to-day, I shall be glad when the thing is over. To-morrow, for example, is said to be *relâche*, and what on earth we are to do, I know not. It is 40 versts to Narva, too far for an excursion, and the country all around is as flat as Salisbury Plain, and when you have seen one Russian village you have seen all. Apropos of Russian villages, it was rather interesting this morning to observe the people of the village where we mounted our horses (about four miles off) assembled to welcome the Czar, with their headman in front bearing an offering of bread and salt, which was duly presented. The people seem happy in a sort of way, and give no evidence of being discontented with their present mode of life. . . .

Ropscha.

August 23rd.— . . . We breakfast and dine always with the Emperor and Empress; consequently the stiffness of etiquette is becoming less burdensome. To-day we sat down to luncheon after the manœuvres in a pretty pavilion, half-way to this place, which belonged to General Barclay de Tolly, and we were only twelve at the Imperial table out in the verandah. The laughing and chaffing were enough to set every one at ease, and I must say nothing can be more perfect than the manner of the Emperor and Empress towards each other and their two sons. If ever people deserved to be happy, they should be so. The manœuvres to-day were more interesting, and as the rain had left us

* My daughter, who on 14th February, 1899, married the Hon. L. R. Flower, elder son of the eighth Viscount Ashbrook.

and the sun vouchsafed to shine, the day's work was enjoyable.

We took leave of our host and hostess at Gomontovo, Baron and Baroness Veglio, who had done their best for us small people as well as their Imperial guests, and now we are in one of the palaces or country houses, 12 versts from Peterhoff, and really a very fine château it is! It has an unfortunate legend attached to it, for it was here that the Empress Catherine II. caused her husband, Peter III., to be strangled. But no one seems to care much about such matters.

There is a trout-stream just in front of the palace entrance, and as we had a couple of hours before dinner waiting for our luggage, I got an old hook and line and float from the lodge-keeper, and with a bit of old fish for a bait, I caught four trout in half an hour, half a pound each! An odd sort of sport, but they all mean to do the same thing to-morrow.

25th.— . . . To-night they are distributing decorations wholesale. My French colleague is engaged at this moment with his servant, sewing on the *grand cordon* of St. Anne. They all admit that our English rule, under which no officers are allowed to accept such decorations, is the true one; and I think you would have been ashamed of my wearing a *grand cordon*, or any other *cordon*, not earned on active service in the field. I never saw such people for stars and medals. Some are literally smothered with them, and, with the exception of the Cross of St. George, none have any value to a soldier.

Hôtel de l'Europe, St. Petersburg.

August 27th, 1884.—The sudden death of Lord Ampthill,* the announcement of which I saw in the *St. Petersburg Journal* last night, would alone prevent my

* British Ambassador at Berlin.

returning *viâ* Berlin, as I could not go to the Grand Parade, so I have decided to return by Stockholm. I go to-morrow to Moscow, and shall stay till Sunday night or Monday morning, according to weather.

Our manœuvres terminated yesterday very happily; a bright sun and cool air helped to keep every one in good humour. The concentration of the two *corps-d'armée* made the work far more interesting, and the final attack and repulse of the invaders was grand and picturesque in the extreme. No fewer than 50,000 men were engaged, and all the 120 guns were brought into action. . . . At two we had an out-of-door luncheon at a kind of farm, where, in the orchard, tables were laid out, and a general scramble of hurrying officers ensued. At the imperial table alone we had chairs. . . .

Then came the hand-shaking with generals and others, and my old friend General Luboudski fairly put both arms round my neck and hugged me tight. "Shall we ever meet again?" were his last words; and I believe he really was in earnest in hoping it might be so, before we have to give an account of our battles and service before a mightier King than the Czar.

. . . Just before dinner, General von Richter, the head of the Emperor's military staff, came to my room, bearing a very handsome flagon of enamelled silver, a present to me from the Emperor, who had sent him off the field after luncheon to execute his orders to buy this as my souvenir. I am not likely to forget his Majesty's gracious expression of goodwill, or this act of kindly thought. . . .

Moscow.

Sunday 31st.— . . . We went to hear the evening service at the new cathedral of St. Sauveur. This grand church has just been completed, and it is certainly the finest modern sacred edifice I have ever seen. It was begun in 1812, to commemorate the expulsion of the French, and

has thus been seventy years in course of construction. Porphyry, marble, mosaic, gold, and painting all combine, and the general effect is delightful. As for the choir, what shall I say? No words can express the charm of those long-drawn-out chords: every voice clear and distinct, yet harmony preserved under all conditions, and time absolutely faultless. If our choirmasters were to come here for a month's training they would begin to know what church music ought to be! . . .

Ligova, near St. Petersburg.

Sept. 4th.— . . . We had dined with our ambassador, and then walked home and gone to bed about 12.30; I was in a profound sleep, when, at 3 a.m., a soldier appeared at my bedside with a note from Colonel Tchitchakoff to say he had a telegram from Peterhof, and that the Empress would see me at ten o'clock next day! As I had to get up and answer this and then ponder as to whether my uniform had been left by my servant Rowland in complete order, you may imagine that I did not get much more rest. By eight I was dressed in full fig, and Tchitchakoff came for me. We caught the nine o'clock train, and were at Peterhof by ten. Driving first to the Chamberlain's—Prince Jean Galitzin—he told me that eleven was the hour for reception, that a room was ready for me, tea, etc., etc.; and a carriage, of course, had been sent for me to the station.

The suite live in pavilions and palaces scattered in all directions about the park. The Emperor and Empress live at Alexandrie in a "cottage," with garden and farm attached, and altogether very little larger than an English villa. . . . After tea and a good toasting before a fire, for it was cold, I drove off to the cottage, and found myself with four or five ministers and generals in a little ante-room. They were waiting, I think, for the Emperor. I was soon sent for, and most graciously received by her

Majesty in her own little room, where, surrounded by flowers and pet dogs, she looked very nice and homely. After a few minutes she said, "Pray come back to luncheon at one o'clock, and you will see the Emperor." I of course bowed acceptance, and went off with Tchitchakoff, who was waiting outside, to see Peter the Great's house and the laboratory for working malachite and other stones, and so passed the time till one, when I returned alone to the cottage, and found myself in the midst of the family party, Emperor and Empress and all the children, Duke of Leuchtenberg (A.D.C. in waiting), Prince and Princess Obolensky, and a dear old lady whose name I could not catch, but who talked to me after luncheon a great deal about General Gordon, in whose career she took much interest. Everything in the arrangements was simple and homely, and the manner in which the children behave to the Emperor and Empress quite perfect. We talked of all sorts of people and places, from the Shah to the street boys of London. Afterwards a cigarette in the drawing-room and a quiet chat with the Empress about England. . . .

Stockholm.

Sept. 8th.— . . . Our party has increased by one—Mr. Nordenfeldt, of great-gun celebrity, having joined us at Aboe. . . . After a perfectly lovely progress up the gulf and harbour, here we are in one of the best hotels I ever saw; and I do not know that I was ever more impressed by the first appearance of a great city than I am as I look out of my window across the river or estuary at the Royal Palace. The brightest of suns, every one in Sunday costume, steamers flying up and down, for you can hire them like cabs. I have had a much-desired tub, and we are going to dine at some gardens as the guest of Mr. Nordenfeldt, who seems to be all-powerful here.

Hôtel d'Angleterre, Copenhagen.

Tuesday, Sept. 9th, 1884.— . . . I am quite charmed with Stockholm, and wonder much why more people do not go there for their summer holiday—the people are so nice and wholesome-looking, and there is a look of freedom and contentedness which appeals much to our English taste. My friend Mr. Nordenfeldt entertained us royally at the summer-garden, where, in addition to the material advantages of a very good dinner, we had a Hungarian band, as well as the band of one of the Guard Regiments. We were in a balcony, and all the bourgeoisie of Stockholm were enjoying themselves below in the garden, tea-drinking, and beer-drinking, wives and children, men and boys, and all so well-behaved. At the end of dinner, at a hint, I suspect, from Nordenfeldt, the band struck up “Rule Britannia” and “God Save the Queen,” and the people cheered, and I had to stand up and bow. Luckily it was nearly dark, for I felt rather like a fool. However, I insisted on sending a message to the bandmaster, requesting that he would play the Swedish national air, which, by the way, is a very fine hymn. So there was more cheering, and we took a lovely drive by moonlight through the park, which is surrounded by the estuaries or fiords. There is some fine timber, oak-trees as well as fine and good ilexes, down to the water’s edge. . . .

We left Stockholm with a strong desire to revisit it.

CHAPTER XIX

LATTER DAYS

1885-1915

WHEN I reached home on returning from Russia, I found—not altogether to my satisfaction—that I had attained the rank of lieutenant-general. This promotion in the ordinary course would have removed me from my command, but H.R.H., the Commander-in-Chief, was pleased to prolong my services as G.O.C. of the Home District for another year, and in the autumn of 1885 I was again employed at foreign manœuvres, on this occasion with the Italian Army, my aide-de-camp being Captain Abdy of the 2nd Life Guards.* Our *rendezvous* was Arona, a not very inviting town at the extreme southern end of the Lago Maggiore. The operations we were to witness comprised the advance of two hostile bodies, one from the Ticino, the other from the Po, the final collision to take place at some point north-east of Milan. From the spectacular point of view the manœuvres lacked interest, the country being so much enclosed, intersected by vineyards, fields of maize, and other high-growing crops.

I was thrown much in the company of the late King of Italy, Umberto, and of his charming consort, Queen Margherita, who survives him. I remember with unfading interest a ride towards the end of one of our day's

* Now Sir Anthony C. S. Abdy, third baronet.

manœuvres when his Majesty, disclaiming any right to take command of so large a body of men brought together for instruction, because he would be compelled to forego his natural wish to be a military leader in time of war, I ventured to assure the King that his recent visits to the hospitals at Naples during the outbreak of the cholera amid that panic-stricken population, had won for him and the Queen greater respect and regard amongst the people of England than any victories which in command of his army he might gain. Turning towards me with a gravity of expression I shall never forget, he murmured, "Ce n'était que mon devoir—ce n'était que mon devoir." After a pause, he added, "If I had died in consequence, my people would have grieved for me; whereas, if you do nothing, nobody regrets your death, and you are forgotten."

All this in the simplest, but most earnest manner. His French was not good, but quite fluent.

To the Hon. Lady Higginson.

Hotel Continental, Milan,

Sept. 7th, 1885.

My letter yesterday was brought to a conclusion by a summons to dress for our visit to Monza. . . . I made acquaintance with a charming Madame de Moltke, whose husband is, I think, Danish Minister in Paris. She has a nice fair daughter of about 18 with her, and combines all the best attractions of the Scandinavian, Saxon, and Russian race. At 5.30 eight carriages formed up and we started, I, as *doyen*, led. The people crowded the streets and were very inquisitive, especially at the railway station, the curious thing is that they appear to entertain no animosity towards the Austrians, and very little cordiality towards the French. Half an hour by rail brought us to Monza,

where court carriages with *chevaux-de-poste* and men with bells and postilions in old-fashioned jackets awaited us, and an aide-de-camp of the King, and so we drove to the Palace, for a description of which *vide* Murray. I will only tell you that it was built by Napoleon I. and the park, the only good one in Italy, is enclosed by a wall eleven miles round. Chamberlains and servants in red liveries received us on the *perron* and led us to a central hall or gallery, with a terrace looking out on the park, the view from which I could have admired had I not been called up much to my surprise to arrange the various missions in groups according to nationalities alphabetically; a process which demanded some thought, for we have hitherto gone by *ancienneté de grade*. There has always been a little undercurrent of jealousy amongst the junior ranks, especially the military attachés, and I was by no means pleased at having to do the work of the Lord Chamberlain.

On a subsequent occasion the King alluded with some expression of surprise to our not having a military attaché at his court. All the other armies represented at the manœuvres having had the advantage of their respective attachés attendance without which it was difficult for a general officer in my position to obtain detailed information. I am happy to say that on my representing his Majesty's views on this point the appointment of a military attaché to the Court of Rome was sanctioned and has been maintained ever since.

However, we sorted ourselves, and I had just got it right when the Queen entered, receiving our bow with much grace, and was followed by the King, who laid hold of me at once by the hand and began with a brusque soldierlike welcome, and went on with good simple conversation, not forced, but well to the point. He then went to all the others, talking to each present. The Queen then came up to me and began in English—fluent

English, with a very pure accent—inquiries as to my services, commands, etc., etc., and then she followed the King along the different groups. Afterwards I crossed the room to be presented to the young Principe di Napoli,* a nice intelligent lad of sixteen in the uniform of the cadets of the Military College. He had the same fluency in English that his mother possesses, and very good manners.

Afterwards General Riccotti, the Minister of War, came and talked to me, and thus an hour or more passed away, for their Majesties did not shirk their royal duties, but spoke to the Japanese and Greeks with equal consideration as to the representatives of greater powers. Then dinner. The King took the only other lady, Princess Somebody (in waiting), and the Queen her son. I and the Minister of War followed, and I sat on the left of the Queen, the Russian general on the left of the King. Throughout dinner the Queen talked on almost every subject in the best possible English: books, authors, people, society, everything but politics. . . . Dinner was prolonged later than intended, and when we went back to the hall, the King came up to me and began a most interesting conversation with reference to the education of the young Prince, to whose promising appearance and manner I had alluded. I am surprised to think that hitherto the King's character has been so misjudged in England, for though quick and jerky in his way of speaking, he carries you away with his extreme earnestness.

. . . This morning we were off at 6.30 for Saonno, hoping to see some more fighting between the advanced Guards; but after riding about till eleven, I and the French and Russian general came back to Milan rather disappointed. The truth is, the country is totally unfit for cavalry operations.

11th.— . . . Yesterday's fight was a very pretty spectacle,

* Succeeded in 1900 as Vittorio Emanuele III.

and, as there were hills overlooking the scene, we were able to take up our quarters for a time in the balcony of a villa and thus get a little shade. I met the King as I was riding along a lane, and his Majesty bid me ride with him, which I did for some time, through little lanes and paths, guided by *carabinieri* in front; his son, the Minister of War, and Staff following us. His Majesty talked of the difficulty of finding good ground for manœuvring, but seemed pleased when I hinted that the general look of prosperity and high cultivation which prevailed was a subject of congratulation, even though it left but little room for the movement of troops. He rode a big horse called Harvester, which had taken the first prize as a hunter at the Agricultural Hall in 1884; but there is no making foreigners understand that, because a horse is a grand hunter, he is suited for a King to ride at the head of his troops. The peasants left their work to look at *il Re*, and were respectful, though not enthusiastic, although in the town of Gallarate there was a good deal of shouting, and "Eviva Umberto!" sounded musically in our ears. Emerging from the green lanes, we rode up a steeply paved street to a half-fortified village overlooking the plain, and opposite Gallarate, our horses' hoofs clattering as we rode two and two, the people, in their costumes of varied colours, crowding to look at the King, the women with the "spingole," baskets of figs, and grapes, and peaches; in the distance the whole range of Monte Rosa, absolutely free from cloud or vapour, and above us all a real Italian sun, plenty of subject to keep the brain of an artist or soldier supplied with material for thought! I left the King at the door of the villa from which he was to watch the impending struggle for the possession of Gallarate, and rejoined my colleagues, to whom I did *not* recount my having been his Majesty's companion for so long, for there is a word called jealousy! The artillery duel which ensued between the opposing

corps soon spread a veil of white smoke across the plain, which added to the picturesque effect of the advancing columns; but mimic war is a difficult thing to describe, so I only report that the defence got the best of it, and, when the *fanfaron* sounded the cease-fire, the attacking force was fairly beaten. Then to luncheon at Gallarate where arrangements had been made for us. At four the King, who had had his luncheon at a private house, walked to the railway station amid the people, with only some *Carabinieri* to keep off the crowd right and left of him. He seemed deservedly popular. We followed in a special train a quarter of an hour after the King's. To-morrow the review on the plain near Gallarate and the *diner d'adieu*.

13th.— . . . The dinner at Milan was a very grand affair. All the chief officers of the First Corps d'Armée, besides ourselves. The Great Salle was built for Eugène Beauharnais by order of Napoleon I., and is a really magnificent room, and the effect of about 2000 wax candles was admirable. I took the Marchesa Trotti in to dinner and sat on the right of the Queen; the King was opposite, having two ladies of the court right and left of him. The Queen impressed me more than ever, and her physical power must be almost equal to her mental qualities. She was well dressed, with plenty of diamonds, and looked to advantage. My lady was very nice and agreeable, speaking excellent English. She lives on the Lake of Como, and asked me to go and pay her an afternoon visit when she heard I was going to Bellaggio, as the Villa Trotti is close to Cadenabbia. . . .

Yesterday we started betimes for Gallarate to attend the review—*grande tenue*, of course, though I had some trouble with the Germans and Austrians, who wanted to wear *tenue-de-campagne*. However, I carried my point, which is simply this, that unless the King gave us a

direct order to appear in undress uniform, it was our duty to appear before him in the same dress that we should wear if in the presence of our own Sovereign. The crowd at Gallarate filled the streets, and we were rather unnecessarily paraded about while waiting for the King. The crowd are very curious and pushing, though not uncivil. We formed ourselves as best we could into a line, and when his Majesty passed us he beckoned me to join him, and I rode with him for fully three-quarters of an hour till we reached the parade ground. Sport, politics, his own early life, Gladstone, Egypt, even Spain—nothing seemed to come amiss, or not to have some interest for him. Everywhere he was well received. Italian peasants clap their hands, but do not cheer much, though *Eviva!* sounded frequently. About three miles of road, and then we reached the plain of Malpensa, halfway between Gallarate and Somma. Here the troops were drawn up (about 36,000) in three long lines, which was a mistake. The inspection was slow and monotonous. We grew quite tired with the *Marcia Reale*, which every regiment played as the King passed. The men looked well and clean. At last the inspection was ended, and we cantered off to the place where the Queen had already stationed herself in a handsome pavilion draped with blue and white. Then came the march past, which was also as a spectacle slow and monotonous. The music, too, was very indifferent. The "run" of the Bersaglieri created a little enthusiasm; yet it would all have been dull but for the arrival of the cavalry, which was hastened as Their Majesties had to catch the train at a particular hour. So the Cavalry, nearly 5000 sabres, came up at a canter and then galloped past in column of squadrons, a sight worth seeing and calculated to revive our spirits. There was a good deal of dash and *entrain* in this, reflecting great credit on the cavalry officers. Halfway through the performance I received a message to the effect that their Majesties

expected the Crown Princess of Germany and her daughters at Monza that afternoon, and desired my presence at dinner with that of my A.D.C. It seemed well-nigh impossible for me to get back to Milan in time to rearrange dress, etc., and drive to Monza, but they considerately allowed me to go up in the King's own train; so I rode behind the cortège to Gallarate and got in at once.

At dinner only the Royal Family and household, Princess of Germany* and her three daughters. I took in to dinner the youngest, Princess Marguerite, a nice, well-mannered little lady of about 12. She talked perfect English, and seemed to think Baveno an earthly Paradise. I was next the Queen on the other side. After dinner, a long talk with the Princess of Germany about home and Egypt, and things in general. To-night, the same thing on a larger scale. I had hoped my attendance would not be required, but it appears we are all expected. At the *dejeuner*, *d'adieu* for the foreign officers, it was necessary for me to make a speech, so I have got over that, and feel more comfortable. I believe I spoke correctly this time, at any rate it seemed to produce the desired effect. . . .

14th.— . . . We all dined at Monza yesterday, and I again took the little Princess Marguerite to dinner, and sat between her and the Queen, the latter more agreeable than ever. The King and Princess of Germany joined in our conversation, talking across the table. After dinner it was more solemn, as the Royalties had to go round and speak to all the members of the Missions; meanwhile I had a long conversation with General Pasi, the King's first A.D.C., and a very distinguished man. At 10.45 a final *adieux* all round, and a repeated invitation from the King for me to go to Rome, and so my short but interesting introduction into the inner life of the Italian Royalties ended. . . .

* Afterwards the Empress of Frederick III.

At Cadennabia we started to walk along the lake shore road to Menaggio, about two miles. We picked up Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft * *en route*; they walked with us the best part of the way. She was most amusing.

I little thought as I took my leave of the royal family at Monza that, many years afterwards, I should have the honour of being selected to attend on the King Vittorio Emanuele at Windsor, whom I had last seen as the very young Prince of Naples in the uniform of a simple corporal at that final gathering of illustrious guests.

Returning to England I awaited with mingled feelings the approaching close of my active career as a soldier. Whatever ambitious hopes I may have cherished of obtaining one of the higher commands for which my rank as lieutenant-general qualified me, I happily learnt that contentment afforded the best solace to disappointment, and my thoughts turned towards that quiet home life the incidents of which would afford but little interest to my readers.

On the eve of resigning my command I held a special parade of the three battalions of the Grenadier Guards which happened to be stationed at the West End of London. After a march past on the familiar Horse Guards Parade, I was about to address them in a few final words of leave-taking, when H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, who happened to be passing, rode up by my side and, declining to take the salute, himself witnessed my farewell to the comrades in whose ranks I had passed more than thirty years of my life. I quitted the parade ground with feelings of mingled pride, gratitude, and regret.

* Now Sir Squire and Lady Bancroft.



THE GUARDS' CHEER AT THE FOOT OF THE CRIMEAN MONUMENT IN
WATERLOO PLACE.

Painted from life by Sir Hubert Herkomer, R.A., on the occasion of Queen
Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.

Reproduced by permission of The Fine Art Society.

It was just at this time that the tragic fate of General Gordon at Khartoum aroused profound indignation and shame throughout the Empire, intensifying the bitterness of party strife. I have no desire to review the circumstances which rendered memorable the death of this devoted champion of right; but to the peculiar interest which I felt in Gordon as a soldier and philanthropist were added my personal feelings towards many of those in the relieving force which was so unfortunately delayed through the death of its commander, Sir Herbert Stewart. Associated with a few others who shared my admiration for Gordon's character, I assisted in forming a little society for carrying on the work among homeless and friendless lads which he had initiated during his time as Commanding Engineer at Gravesend. By degrees we increased both in number and influence, and the committee which we formed derived much benefit from the advice of Lord Shaftesbury,* Lord Tennyson,† and Cardinal Manning,‡ in arranging preliminaries for the foundation of a memorial institution, afterwards known as the Gordon Boys' Home.

Meanwhile a strong movement for a national memorial spread through the land. The Lord Mayor called a meeting at the Mansion House to give effect to the general feeling, independent of party, for the permanent commemoration of Gordon as a national hero. At this meeting the Prince of Wales presided. Doubts and difficulties as to the form and character of the memorial had to be faced, and I was invited to attend a subsequent

* Seventh Earl, died in 1885.

† The Laureate, first Lord, died in 1892.

‡ Died in 1892.

meeting at the Mansion House, as representing our committee. Here the Prince informed me that our scheme had been considered by his committee, and that he was authorized to invite our committee to join them. We agreed willingly, and from that date the Gordon Boys' Home, as it now stands, has remained the National Memorial. The Prince of Wales promised me that he would never fail in giving us his support, a promise which, to the end of his days, our lamented King Edward nobly fulfilled. He appointed Field-Marshal Lord Napier of Magdala* the first chairman of our committee, and I could thenceforth claim the honour of friendship with that distinguished officer. The success which has marked the institution thus auspiciously begun has never flagged. By allowing herself to be nominated Patron of the Home, Queen Victoria bestowed a mark of royal favour without precedent in the commemoration of a subject.

On the death of Field-Marshal Sir Lintorn Simmonds, who had succeeded Lord Napier as chairman of the committee, I was nominated by our late King Edward to assume that office, and I look back with gratitude to the knowledge that, through the wise counsels of my colleagues on the committee and the efficiency of the staff, I have contributed to maintaining Gordon's great work among the helpless and forlorn. There were also friends, from whom, though not officially connected with the Home, I received valuable counsel and sympathy in the undertaking. Among these, I may mention the much-honoured name of Florence Nightingale, who wrote as follows :—

* Died in 1890.

10, *South Street, Park Lane,*
January 16, 1892.

. . . Would I could help you in what you so truly say is the immense difficulty of the choice among 97 candidates for the headship of the Gordon Boys' Home. . . . Encouraged by your kindness, may I venture to suggest that the first step to facilitate your decision would be to eliminate from the 97 candidates all those who have not had a successful experience in training boys of this class, and thus proved themselves competent to head the Gordon Boys' Home.

Pray believe me,
Ever faithfully yours,
FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

Freed from all active employment, I passed the winter of 1887-8 at Rome with my wife and daughter, partly in consequence of a cordial intimation from H.M. the King of Italy during one of our rides at the manœuvres, that it would give him pleasure to see me again. To revisit the Eternal City, of which I retained such vivid and happy recollections, hardly needed such an inducement, and with my wife and daughter I enjoyed all the advantages which admission to the Quirinal and the agreeable society which sprang from the foundation of the new régime afforded. Yet I sadly missed the promenade on the Pincio, where, in the old papal days, the cardinals took their afternoon drive in their state coaches, and the adjacent Ludovisi Gardens offered a shady retreat on the spot now covered by rows of modern buildings. The artists' models used then to assemble in every variety of costume on the steps of the Trinità dei Monti, and the Baths of Diocletian were not profaned by the proximity of

a railway station or the fearful modernity of the Via Nazionale.

The King invited me to ride with him at the review held on his birthday, and I do not forget the kindly way in which the prime minister, M. de Robillant, glancing at my red coat, murmured, "*C'est fort agréable d'avoir à coté de moi un ami sûr en habit rouge.*" Queen Margherita received my wife and daughter in a private audience with all her accustomed grace of manner.

Hitherto I have made no allusion to the long-awaited reward of the Knighthood of the Bath, my claim for which had been acknowledged in flattering terms by the highest military authority, but which circumstances needless to refer to had unavoidably delayed. I had, however, received my cross of the C.B. in 1877. The fears I entertained that further promotion in the Order might be remote were happily removed by finding myself, without any previous notice, gazetted a K.C.B. in 1889, and in the same year I was appointed to succeed my old friend Lord Chelmsford as Lieutenant of the Tower of London. The story of this ancient fortress is so well known that I need only say that I share with every educated Englishman those feelings to which it must give rise, enriched as it is by more than a thousand years of legendary and historic lore, whereof the interest has been renewed with the reign of every sovereign since William the Conqueror laid its foundation stone. Neither the Burg at Vienna nor the Temple at Paris can claim an antiquity equal to that of the Tower of London, and I could fill pages with records of chivalry, crime, and pageantry with which the accident of my occasional residence within its walls enabled me to store my mind.

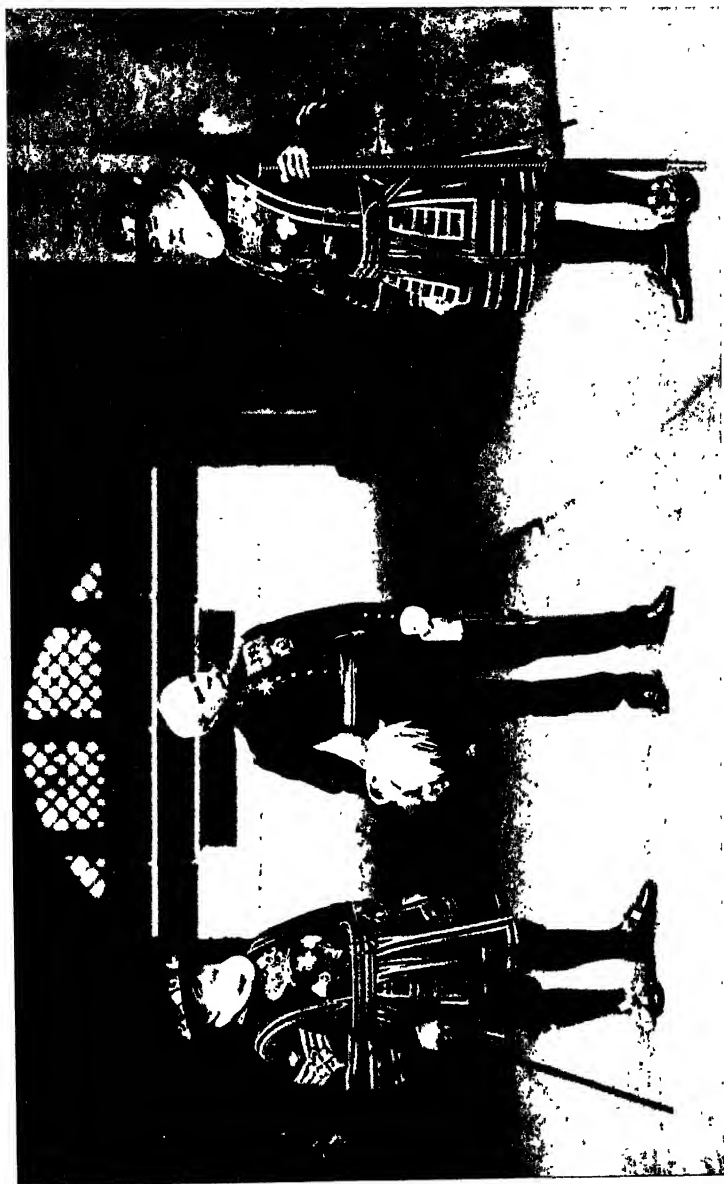


Photo. Elliott & Fry.

UNDER THE ARCHWAY OF THE BLOODY TOWER.
(Traitor's Gate in the distance.)

Enough for me to say that I began my career as a Grenadier in 1845 in the Tower of London, and that I closed it as Lieutenant-Governor of the ancient fortress in 1893.

During my term of office at the Tower, I was thrown much in the society of Lord Napier of Magdala, then Constable of the Tower, and learnt to recognise that combination of simple geniality with the sternest resolution which had won for him the esteem and confidence of all who had served under his command. I was a pall-bearer at his funeral at St. Paul's in 1890.

I had now attained the rank of full general, and shortly afterwards, on reaching the age of sixty-seven, was placed on the retired list in 1893. Though all active work as a soldier was thus ended, opportunities for retaining interest in congenial occupation were not denied to me. Elected a Governor of Wellington College, I have been permitted to watch the growing importance of the memorial to our revered Duke, while the Gordon Boys' Home and the chairmanship of the Royal United Kingdom Beneficent Association were added to the ordinary duties of country life. Winters necessarily passed abroad on account of my wife's health, both in Italy and France, kept me in touch with men and cities, but the life of a Guardsman had come to an end. Yet why should I say it had ended when I have before me a token of regard which has led me to believe that services loyally rendered meet with a recompense which no words can record with adequate force? On the occasion of our golden wedding, among the sheaf of letters and gifts which greeted us, I value above all the letter which accompanied a beautiful gold cup, expressing the cordial affection of all ranks in the Regiment.

*Regimental Orderly Room, Grenadier Guards,
28 July, 1908.*

MY DEAR GENERAL,

By desire of His Royal Highness the Colonel, and of the Officers and Men, past and present, of the Regiment, I am writing to send you and Lady Higginson the warmest congratulations of the Grenadier Guards on the occasion of your Golden Wedding.

I am also sending you, on their behalf, a present, as a mark of the affection and esteem we feel for a truly representative Grenadier, a title you have earned, not only by your services in and to the Regiment, but by the continual interest you have never ceased to take in the welfare of all ranks.

We hope that the Cup will remind you and Lady Higginson, for many years to come, of this expression of the deep regard felt for you by your Comrades of the First or Grenadier Regiment.

Yours most sincerely,

ST. LEVAN, *Colonel.*

(Lieut.-Colonel Commanding Grenadier Guards.)

All the recent events to which my memory reverts have been chronicled by so many pens that it would be needless for me to refer to them except in so far as I took a personal part.

At the funeral of the late Queen I was seated in a corner window of Apsley House in company with the well-known *Times* correspondent, Sir William Russell, and another friend, when the simple gun-carriage, unadorned with any evidence of funeral pomp, passed slowly under the central arch at Hyde Park Corner, so closely followed by the heavily-cloaked figure on horseback of her son, the King as yet uncrowned, that he appeared to be sole

guardian of the mortal remains of her, of whom we never thought or spoke save with the deepest reverence. Each of us, after a prolonged silence, confessed that this thought arrested all further desire to watch the rest of the funeral display. Not even the splendour of her Jubilee and Diamond Jubilee and the acclamations of enthusiastic crowds on those two occasions, were half so impressive as the silent homage of her people assembled to witness her final journey from the city which she knew and loved so well to her resting-place in the Mausoleum at Windsor.

Within a few years I followed as a pall-bearer the remains of the royal chief, under whom I had served for so long, H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge. I bear in grateful remembrance his personal kindness towards me, both when I held inferior rank and when I was a general officer in the Guards.

An annual visit to Sandringham, together with many other proofs of the sincerity of our late King's constant regard for those with whom he had been associated in his younger days, have left an impression on my memory to which I allude thus briefly lest I should dwell in too strong language upon the depth of my affectionate respect for his memory. In 1894 I happened to be at Cowes, on board a yacht moored within a short distance of the *Victoria and Albert*. On going to write my name at the gangway, I was summoned to his Majesty's cabin, when he said, "I am expecting the King of Italy this autumn, and have selected you to be in attendance as representing the Army." A week at Windsor, therefore, in the following November brought me again into the company of the young Monarch whom I had first known as a youthful corporal

at the palace at Monza during my military mission to the army of his illustrious and unfortunate father in 1884.

Previous to this I had had the honour of being invested with the Grand Cross of the Bath, having thus attained the highest decoration conferred by the Sovereign for military services; and I can say without affectation that, as I passed out of the palace with the broad ribbon and star over my uniform, I looked at the sentries belonging to my old regiment and said to myself, "It was with men like *you* that I won this honourable distinction."

It can be well understood why I should dwell but briefly upon the death of King Edward VII. From the age of sixteen to the time of his death he had honoured me by many proofs of personal regard, while the kindly recognition I meet with from that gracious lady who has rendered the name of Alexandra a household word in England, often revives many happy memories of Sandringham and Marlborough House.

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QUEEN ALEXANDRA AT THE GORDON BOYS' HOME ON MY 90TH BIRTHDAY,
JUNE 21ST, 1916.

ENVOI

I END abruptly, nor is the cause far to seek, for, as I sat retracing in the quiet hours of home seclusion the final stages of my active life, the sudden "call to arms" on that fateful 4th of August, 1914, diverted all thoughts of the past into an ever-increasing interest in the present and the future.

Week succeeds week, and every dispatch from the seat of war, whether from the thousand-mile front, behind which we and our allies the French stand so firm, or the less clearly defined limits on the eastern frontier so long threatened by the Russian armies, tells us of new weapons, new agents of destruction—aeroplanes, guns of unprecedented size, and even poisonous gases—causing one to feel that any criticism based on history or scientific experience would be valueless.

The same regiments which fought with Marlborough at Ramillies, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet are at this moment almost on the same ground earning still nobler fame by their indomitable endurance. But Vauban and Coehoorn would gaze with amazement on the modern system of approach by trench and the defenceless condition of the cities which, fortified by their skill, were deemed impregnable. He would be a bold man indeed

who could lay down fixed rules, even of an elementary nature, for the training of either officers or men of modern armies, more especially our own. The advance of science is so rapid in the discovery of new elements of destruction, that we seek in the laboratory of the chemist to check the fierce charge of the bayonet. I feel, therefore, it would be premature to anticipate these inevitable changes in armament and to a great extent in tactics; but there will still remain those great principles of strategy hitherto narrowed in their application by natural obstacles, such as mountains, rivers, and desert plains, which have always demanded the close study of means of transport. The railway, the motor-lorry, the cycle, let alone the aircraft's mysterious powers, which have yet to be perfected, will greatly widen the area on the maps, by the measurements of which the strategist has hitherto planned his campaign. We hear of 30,000 to 40,000 men and all their *matériel* transported from two to three hundred miles with a speed and facility which compel us to lay aside our study of the combinations for uniting vast forces as practised by Marlborough, Eugène and subsequent great leaders, as waste of time. Yet the principles must remain as strongly in force as ever. What a wide field for thought and study suggests itself! Geography, geometry, applied mechanics, chemistry, physics, languages and even geology stand in the forefront of the subjects the study of which must become obligatory in the training of any future officers of the General Staff; and on the General Staff must depend the efficiency of our armies of the future.

This is not the moment for making comparisons with

the system of the German General Staff, which we recognize as a model of completeness, adapted to the special needs of that nation, and which for upwards of forty years, we may almost say from the days of Jéna, has formed, step by step, the most perfect of military organizations in the world. The problem before us is how to graft into the character of the Briton, glorying in the liberties of democracy and impatient of control, those high, patriotic motives which will induce him to subordinate all his powers, mental and bodily, to the almost unintelligible demands of military discipline. Yet, after all, the appeal to the intellectual rather than to the physical powers of the soldier must gain force by the advance in scientific knowledge of the mechanical forces employed; and consequently the monotony of the barrack-yard will find relief in the fuller exercise of brain-power in training for the field. At the risk of being considered visionary I picture to myself the foundation at each of our two great Universities of a college in which the students can obtain, under the university system, a complete course of training in all those branches of science which I have already mentioned. I can see the young officer selected as a promising candidate for the General Staff and already proficient in every regimental detail, entering the college with the prospect of graduating for a military degree. Within the walls of—shall we call it St. George's?—College, he would at once devote himself to a closer study of the languages selected, more especially in compositions which need absolute accuracy in expression and meaning. Easy access to libraries and laboratories would enable him to extend his knowledge in history and

science, while the lectures of the great professors would give him facilities for perfecting himself in whichever branch he wished to specialize. Intimate association with students of colleges destined for other professions, far from detracting from his course of education, would stimulate his exertions and, above all, serve to keep him free from the narrow and objectionable self-sufficiency of military class distinction, which is so singularly repugnant to our British ideal. Field sports and competitions with other colleges, whether in the rival teams of cricket and football or in the hunting field, would maintain the physique in health, and I can see the graduate taking a first class in Military Honours, duly qualified to enter the great General Staff, the headquarters of which would of course be in London.

I leave the details to those already charged with building up such a military system as would ensure a supply, and a large supply, of men qualified to command brigades and divisions, in addition to providing generals holding the higher commands of large expeditionary forces, with staff officers efficient in every respect. Neither Aldershot nor our other great training camps would lose their importance in consequence; the whole of the directing power for the undertaking of great campaigns being concentrated within the walls of the General Staff. Every demand from India, the Dominions, and the Colonies, would be referred to its special department from which, for amendment and final approval, it would be carried to the highest authority, the head or heads of the General Staff. I can conceive no policy of the Government which would not be met with a ready

response for the better preparation of our land forces to undertake immediate service in the field.

We cannot expect such rapid results as would produce a von Roon or a Moltke, but the confidence of the country in the sound judgment of such an Headquarter Staff, the composition of which I have so briefly traced, would go far to allay, if not altogether remove the sense of uneasiness which prevails amongst all thinking men, when a new war policy is announced. Nevertheless, I would emphasize rather than deprecate the importance of maintaining the regimental system, for this apparently minor organization is really the mainspring on which the efficiency of our army depends. The true meaning of leadership can only be acquired in the battery, the squadron, or the company. It is true there are born leaders, but, as regards the majority of our younger officers, the growth of confidence in their powers to direct and control those under them, must be gradual, drawn from those sources which pride of race, habits of study and hope of distinction provide. Respected, perhaps beloved in time of peace, in the hour of danger and in the rage of battle the company officer has but to use the words "Follow me!" and the honour of his regiment is assured. We read of the German troops hurled in masses to the assault by orders mingled with threats from the commander *in rear*. It is needless to say that in an army such as ours, the private soldier would resent and the officer would scorn such an interpretation of the word "leadership." In every history of our great campaigns from Marlborough's days to the present the deeds of the regimental officers, from colonel to subaltern, have attracted the pride and sympathy of

the readers of those annals more readily than the mere chronicle of a successful campaign. I may be pardoned for dwelling with force on this subject, for scarce a year has passed since it was my privilege to watch from day to day here in my own neighbourhood, the training of two battalions of my old regiment. As I noted the strengthening of the tie which united the younger officers with the men in the ranks whom they were so soon to be called upon to lead, I felt how comparatively unimportant were the great changes in armament or tactical manœuvre, so long as that mutual confidence exists between him who leads and him who follows, which has enabled them to face the rude ordeal which they have so recently undergone.

The ink is hardly dry as I write these concluding pages, when the news arrives which, for the moment, forbids our thoughts to dwell upon any subject save the calamity with which our nation has been visited by the death of Lord Kitchener. To speak of his loss as irreparable would seem to imply that no worthy successor could be found. Far be it from me to say that our English race cannot provide men of similar stamp, but, for the moment it would seem that the guide and counsellor—in a word the man whom we all trusted—has been removed from us, and with anxious thoughts we seek one who can assume the reins of power, which in the estimation of his countrymen he alone was qualified to control. Under this terrible blow all thoughts of definite schemes for the future are driven from our minds by the supreme importance of our present needs, and I must treat the bold projects which may yet be fulfilled, and under which every free citizen

should receive a soldier's training, as dreams for the future.

And now I close this "apology" for a life which has already entered its tenth decade. I had much still to chronicle, but how tame would tales of peaceful incident and adventure appear, when the thoughts of all of us turn solely to the daily records of the noble lives which our nearest and dearest are devoting to their King and Country. Since I wrote the first page of these memories the old regiment has well maintained the position it has held for two hundred and fifty years—*Primus inter pares*—at a cost the growing extent whereof we dare not estimate. I leave to another and younger pen the story. Yet how can I conclude without a reference in the true sense of comradeship, to another distinguished regiment, the Worcester.* Of their heroism the historians of this war will have much to tell, and much water will flow beneath the bridge that spans the Severn, before the citizens of Worcester, young and old, will cease to "stand a tip-toe" as the story is related, of how their county regiment bore itself at Gheluvelt.

A few parting words—for I cannot turn towards the empty chair or miss the merry laugh, without thoughts of pride, as their soldier grand-sire, towards the two lads who have so well carried on the traditions of his family; one †

* The writer was appointed Colonel of the Worcestershire Regiment on 29th August, 1893.

† Kenneth FitzPatrick Mackenzie, scholar of Wellington College and Trinity, Oxford; History Honours, 1914; passed for clerkship in House of Lords, August, 1914; in the same month joined 5th Batt. Q. O. Cameron Highlanders; promoted Lieutenant December of the same year; killed at Loos in the first attack on the Hohenzollern Redoubt 25th September, 1915, aged 24.

laying aside the prospects of a brilliant future, after a school and university career of singular promise, found a soldier's death near the Hohenzollern Redoubt, leaving but seventeen survivors of his company to relate how nobly the Camerons fought and fell.

His elder and only surviving brother,* a soldier by profession, severely wounded early in the campaign is again at the front, there to add to the good reputation he has already won.

Fully conscious that my self-imposed task may fail to accomplish its object, I trust that the kindly reader will find in this continuous thread of many years, from the days of vivid hopes and earnest aspiration, through the disappointments and failures of maturity, down to the serenity which softens the infirmities of old age, such friendly counsel as may bid the youngster take heart and follow on, while it warns the more adventurous against self-advertisement and the too ardent pursuit of honours.

Ambition is a good servant though an exacting master, and I am not in full agreement with Shakespeare's Cardinal who bids his friend to "fling away ambition," for I find more comfort and counsel in the lines of our great poet of later days—

"A man's reach should exceed his grasp
Or what is Heaven for?" . . .

* D. W. A. D. Mackenzie, B.A., Magdalen College, Oxford. Captain, Seaforth Highlanders; wounded near Neuve Chapelle, October 1914; special employment War Office 1915; Staff-Captain in May and D.A.A.G. at General Headquarters in July, 1916.

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